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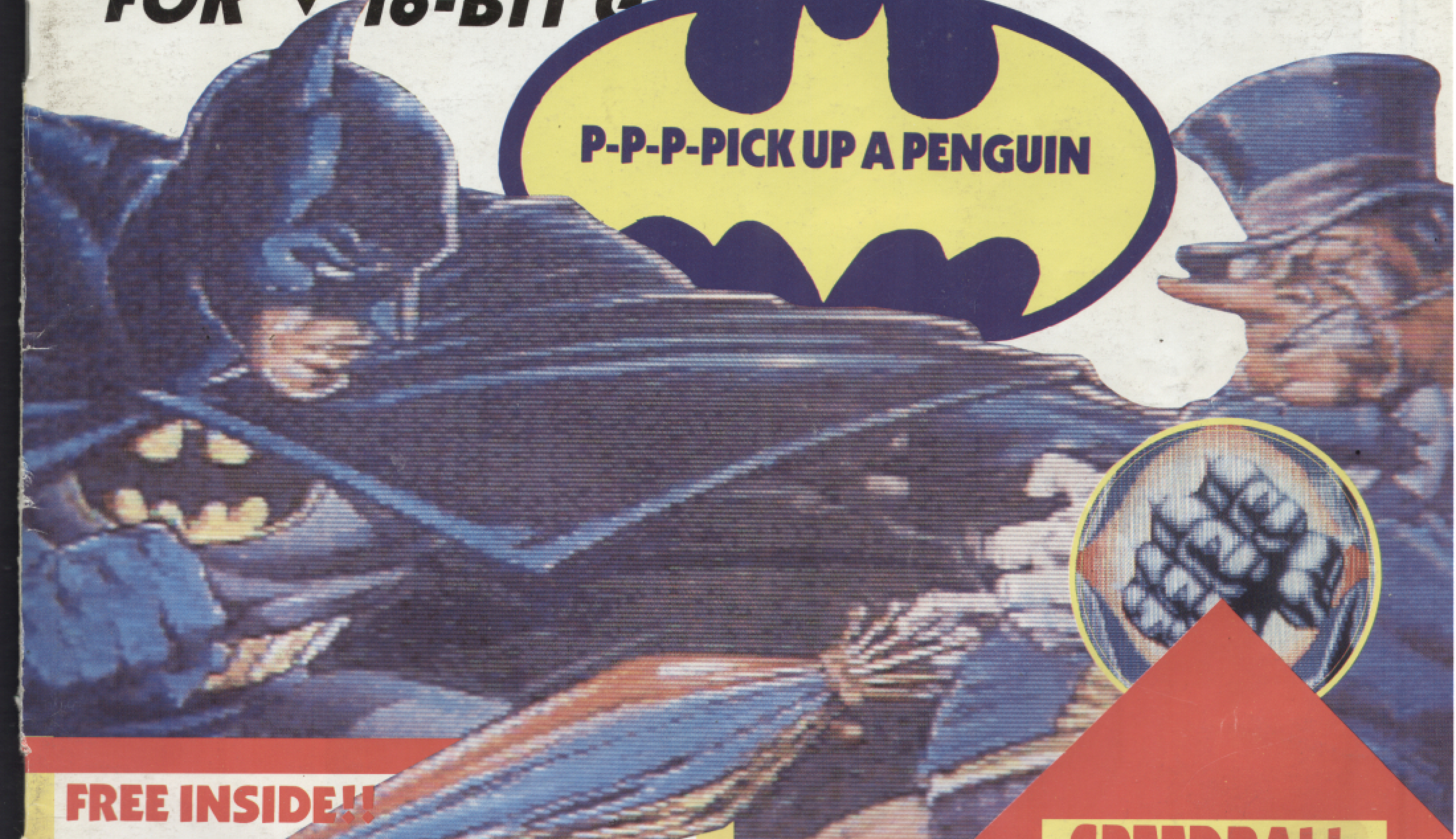
THE One

ATARI ST
AMIGA
PC

FOR 16-BIT GA

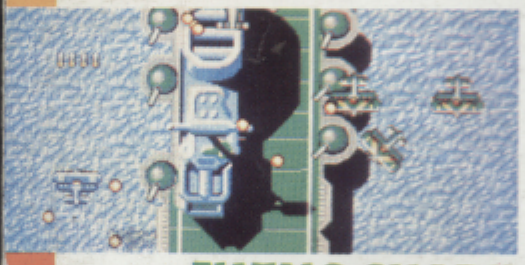
OPERATION WOLF
Ocean's conversion Uzis playability





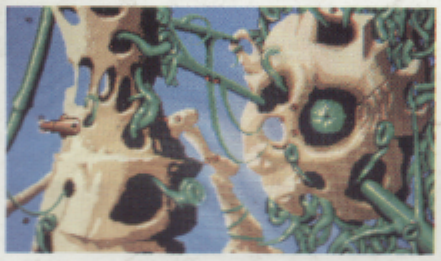
P-P-P-PICK UP A PENGUIN

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1989 WALL PLANNER



FLYING SHARK
Firebird

PHANTOM FIGHTER
Martech



TURBO CUP Loriciels



SPEEDBALL
Player's Guide

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CONT



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8 NEWS

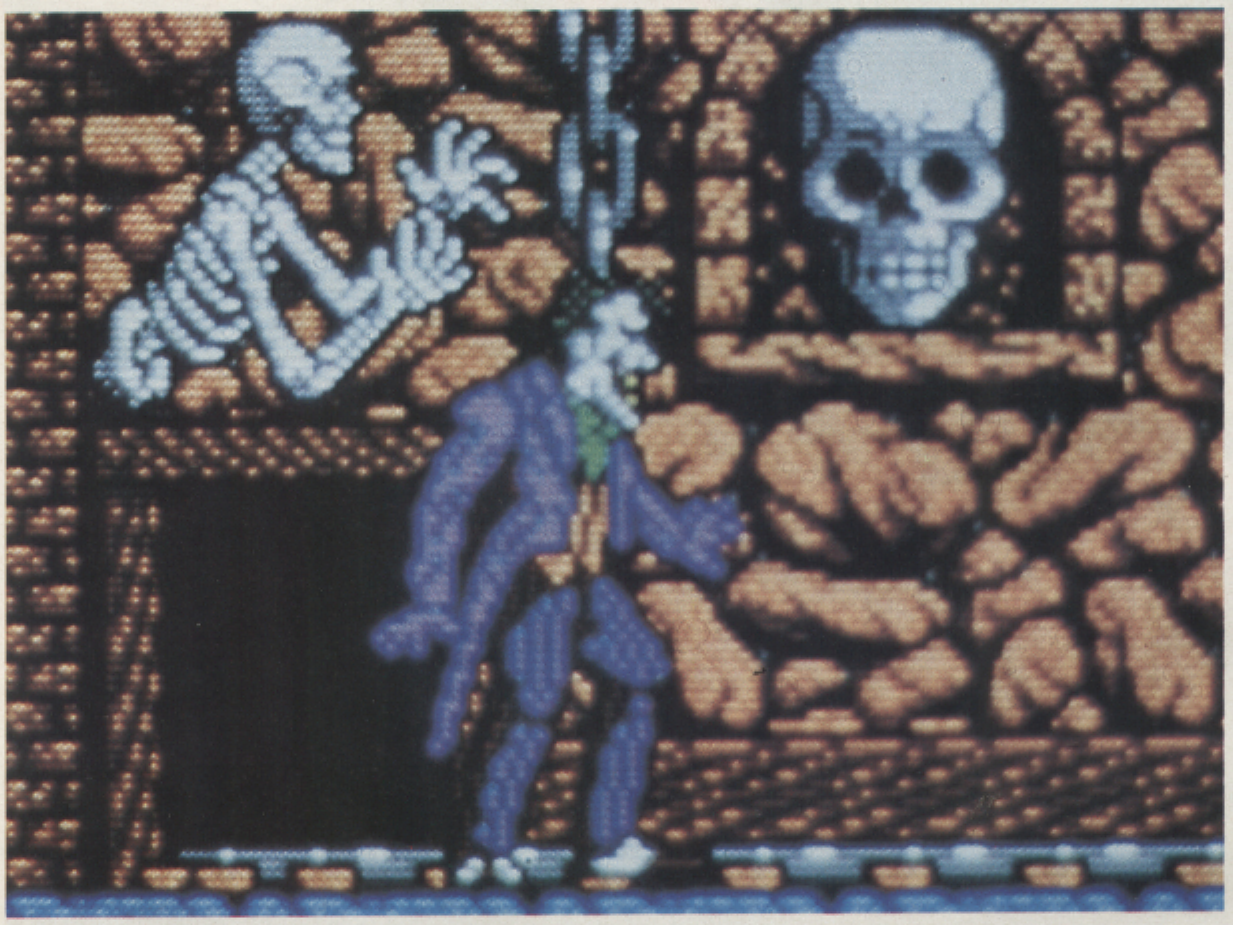
Coin-op conversions for Christmas and the New Year include US Gold's weighty Thunderblade Image Works' Blasteroids. And when it comes to classics, there's news of the follow-up to Mercenary . . . and whatever happened to The Last Ninja?

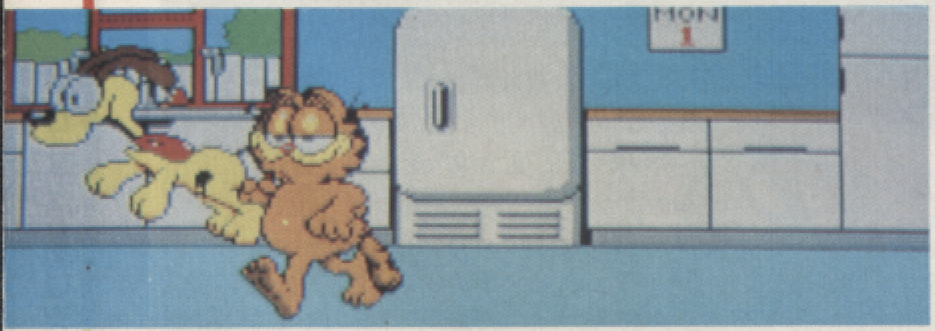
18 REVIEWS

44 pages of pictures, prose and probing.

26 BATMAN

He may not have a Robin beside him, but the Caped Crusader is all set to give the Penguin the bird in Ocean's latest Batgame.



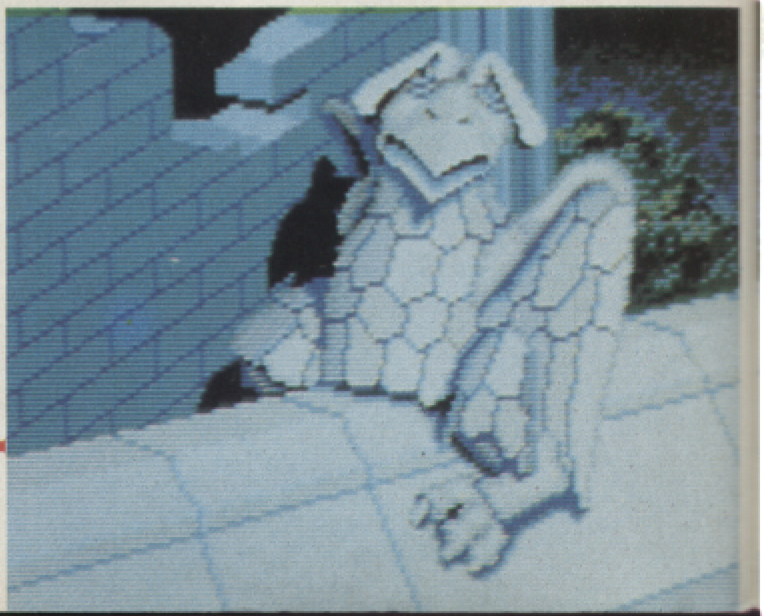


49 GARFIELD

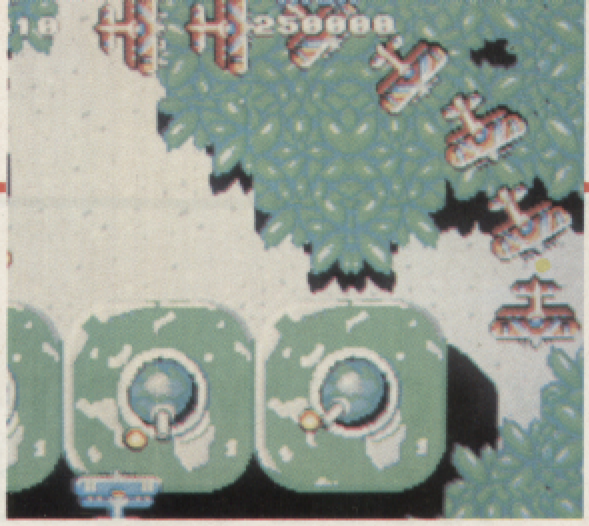
The fabulous fat feline that spawned a thousand spin-offs has finally made it onto 16-bit screns, as The Edge brings you the latest versions of its **Garfield** game. So if you have the mug, the badge, the cuddly toy and the rest, why not have a go at kicking Odie for yourself?

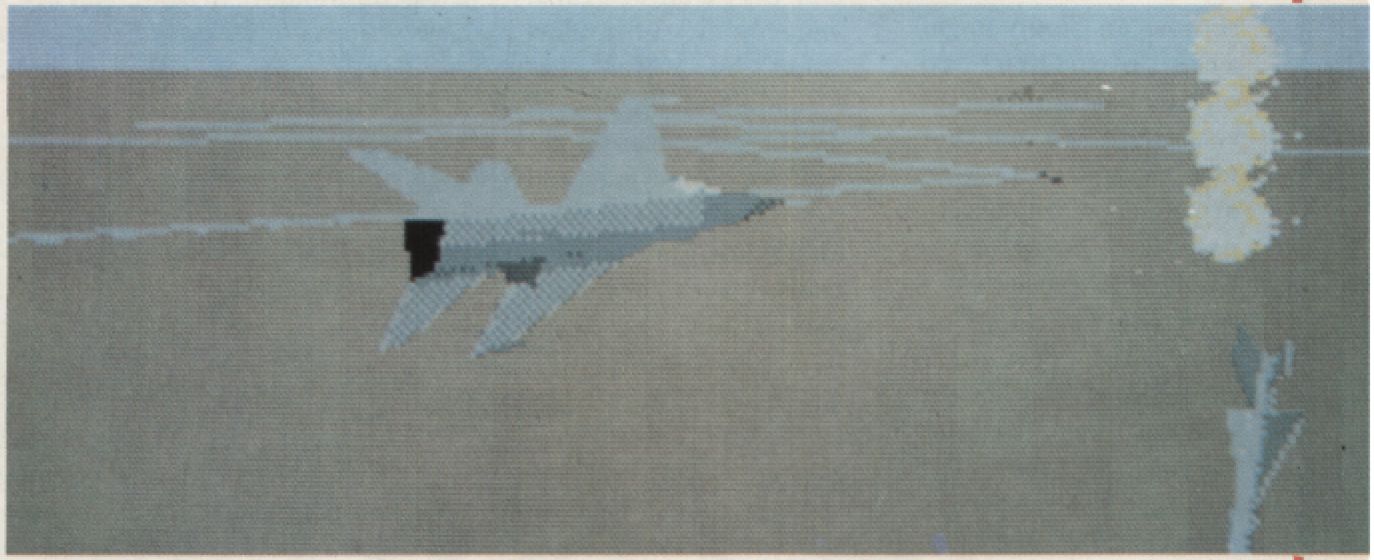
87 FISH!

It could have been all wet, but we haddock good time with Magnetic Scroll's piscine adventure.

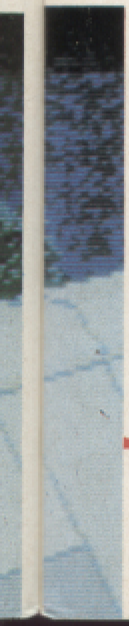


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WHO'S WHO FOR ISSUE THREE

CIARÁN BRENNAN

A familiar name to some, an unmanageable mouthful to others. Up until recently it seemed that Mr Brennan was attempting to get his name into The Guiness Book of Records as the man who's worked on the most computer magazines. The almost endless list includes Crash, ZZAP! 64, Amtix, Your Sinclair, C&VG, CTW and now, of course, The One. His latest escapade has been a foray into the Amiga world and he can now be found knock..ing on total strangers' doors and telling them how great Rocket Ranger **and** F/A-18 Interceptor **are.**

STEVE JARRATT

The one-time industrial chemist and CRASH editor recently joined Commodore User as Deputy Editor, but for reasons best known to himself, Steve has just decided to do a bunk and pop down to Bath to pursue a career at Future. So long, Steve.

GRAHAM TAYLOR

Mr T edits sister publication Sincalir User during the day, but by night he finds himself taken over by his ST and recently acquired Amiga.

BRIAN NESBITT

Our Bri's a bit of a card, yes he is. Misunderstood by some (like Firebird's Colin Fudge) as a complete and utter dullard, 28 year old Brian (or Brian as he is best known to his chums) lives, breathes, eats, drinks, and sleeps with computer games. The bespectacled brain of Barnet enjoys processing words, playing Scrabble **and** Xenon **on his Amiga. His brother owns an ST.**

NICHOLAS O'KELLY

This diminutive Irishman's words of wisdom regularly appear in sister rag Commodore User, but this month he took a little time off to take a look at the Japanese side of electronic entertainment.

GARY PENN

He's been around a bit has our Gazza, and he's certainly picked up plenty of experience in the process. His current faves include Image Work's Speedball, **Image Work's** Speedball, and . . . Image Work's Speedball.

MARK SCRIVEN

Our Advertisement Manager is the man who manages the advertisements . . . That is, when he's not playing Speedball **(that's in his lunch hour, fatty), and helping out with the cover lines.**

GARY WHITTA

Are you the sort of person who judges books by their covers? If you are, you may think this 16 year old cheeky Chingford chappy is a bit of a chump. But he's not (much). In between giving as good as he gets at Speedball, **Gary writes a fair bit.**

The most widely read part of almost all computer magazines is the reviews. Different magazines have different review styles and ideals, but all aim to offer an authoritative opinion. Some prefer to use any old reviewer to review any piece of software, so you occasionally end up with someone who hates a particular type of game slagging it off. This raises an important point. Consistency.

When different people get to see different games . . . say one person reviews **Xenon** and says it's the best shoot 'em up ever seen, but in the same month another person reviews **Sidewinder** and also says it's the best shoot 'em up ever seen. Neither has seen the other's game, so who's right? No-one really. It's all a matter of opinion, but one should endeavour to ensure it's a consistent opinion.

While only one person is seen to review a game, at least two of us play everything that comes in, so the ratings and opinions you read are invariably those of the same people. Three opinions are all very well, but why bother to express the opinions of someone who doesn't like a particular type of game, and thus affect the ratings when an average is taken.

But review styles aren't as important as the means by which some reviews appear. Does a game have to be 100% complete to review it? No, as long as there's enough of the game present to give and accurate indication as to its quality. For example, if there are four progressive levels to a game and only the first two are fully complete, why not review it? If the product was complete, and assuming those two levels aren't too easy to finish, the chances of seeing the last two levels would be pretty slim anyway.

It's all very easy to get an early demo of a game, review it and give it a good mark so no-one complains too loudly. All well and good. But what if the game's not really very good? Who can you trust! For example, Mastertronic recently provided magazines with very early preview demos of their conversion of the coin-op **Double Dragon.** Graphically it's unlikely to change, fine. But the gameplay needs serious tweaks. Needless to say, we didn't review it. A similar situation arose with **R-Type.** At the time of writing, not one level is complete. An eight-level demo sits in our office at the moment, and it took a phone call to Electric Dreams to find that they had a lengthy list of changes to make and so it couldn't be reviewed. The same thing almost happened with Martech's **Phantom Fighter.** Early demos were given out, and despite the fact that umpteen changes and additions were to be made, one magazine actually reviewed and slated it before being told that the version they reviewed was simply a far from incomplete demo.

There are two lessons to be learned here: software houses should be careful to stress that any incomplete but playable demos shouldn't be reviewed, otherwise chances are the consumer could be mislead with a poor review of what could turn out to be a decent product. Secondly, magazines should be a little more scrupulous in their search for exclusives.

What do *you* think?





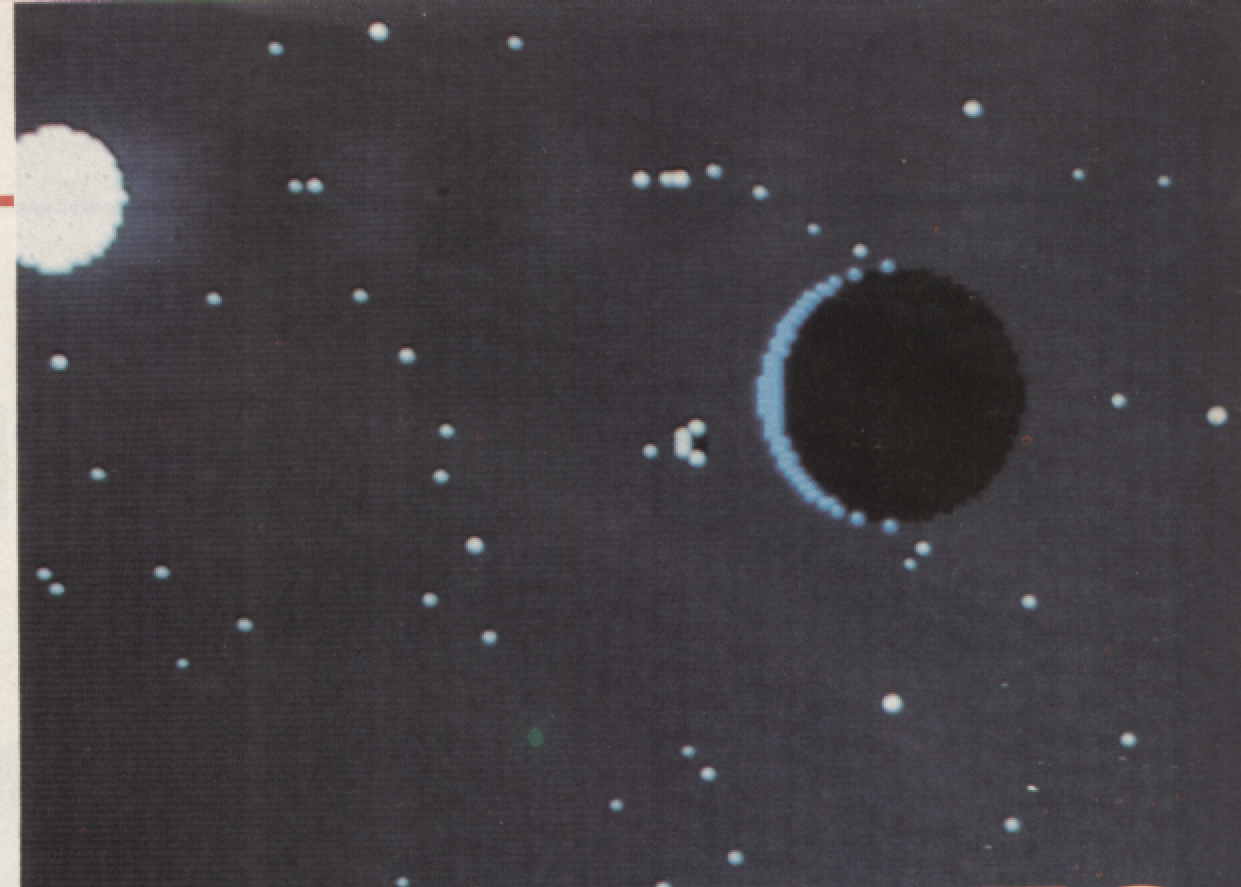
TODAY'S · LEISURE · SOFTWARE

RAINBIRD

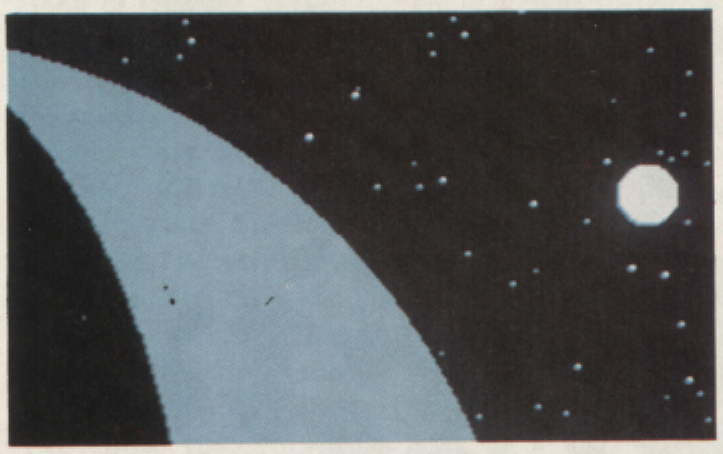
COMING SOON ON ATARI ST £24.99 · AMIGA £24.99 · COMMODORE 64 CASSETTE £14.99 · DISC £19.99 · IBM £24.99

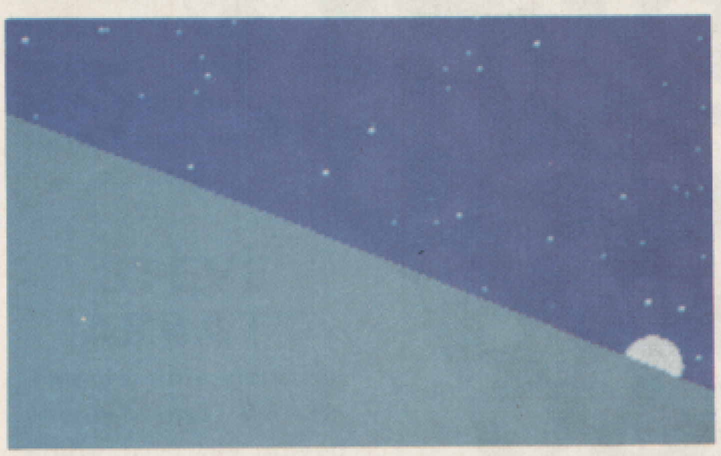
Atari ST screen shots

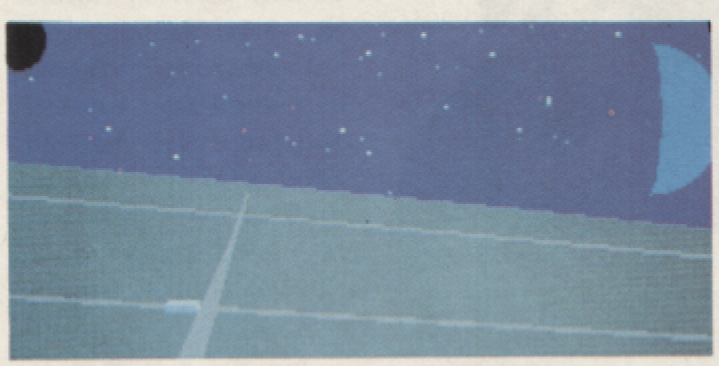
NEWS











DAMOCLES

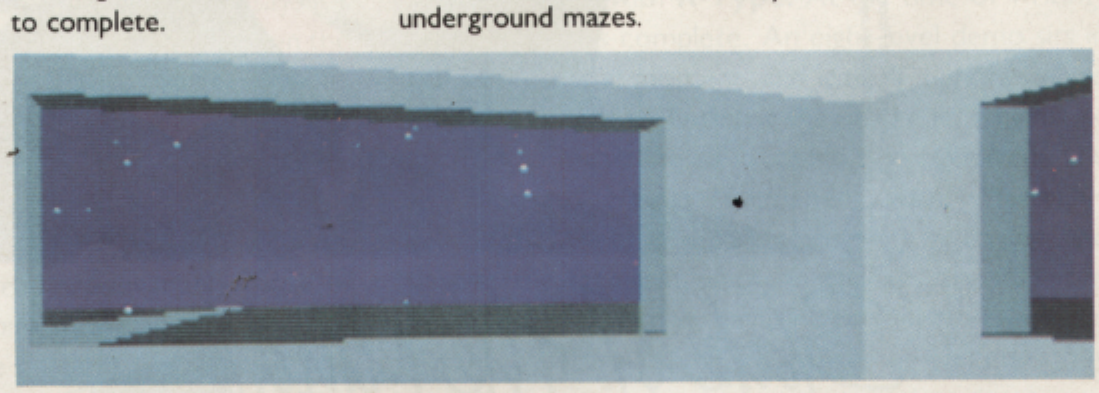
PAUL Woakes' long-awaited sequel to **Mercenary** is almost complete and due for a February release on ST and Amiga. **Damocles** has been in development on and off for the last 18 months, with Paul taking a break at the end of last year to finish writing the **Battlezon**style shoot 'em up **Backlash.**

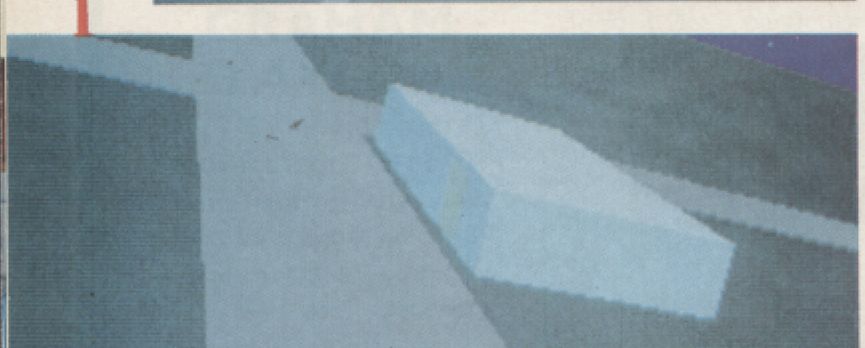
Damocles is the name of an asteroid which is on a collision course with your home planet. You have roughly three hours to prevent disaster, but the game doesn't finish there ... Paul's currently deciding on further tasks to complete.

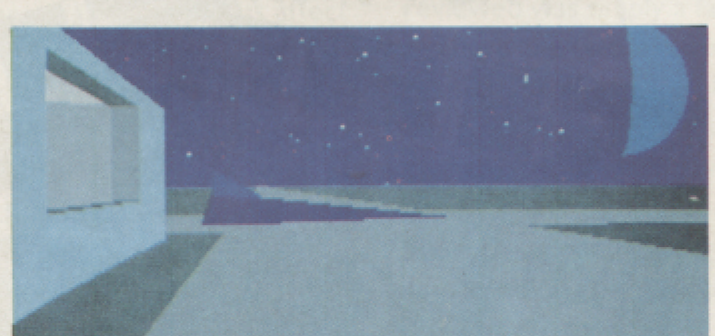
Mercenry II takes place in the solar system you were going when you were so rudely interupted at the beginning of **Mercanary**. There are nine planets and 18 moons to explore, with gameplay following a similar exploratory format as before – only this time the graphics are filled 3D, the play area is roughly 100 times bigger and there's the possibility of 20 or 30 times the data. You can fly around, land on planets and admire the star constellations, sunrises and other planets, or you can enter buildings, with lifts taking you into vast underground mazes.

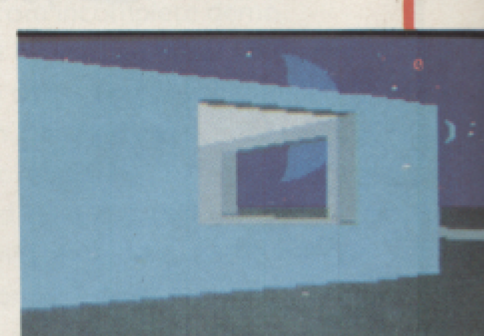
A PC version is a possibility, and if there's enough interest in the original **Mercenary** then Paul may well convert it too.

As for Paul's other project ... **Skeltor** has been shelved temporarily, and he isn't likjely to go back to it until **Damocles** is well and truly out of the way. **Skeltor** was originally intended to be something along the lines of a filled 3D version of Atari's classic coin-op **Asteroids**, but this could change drastically when Mr Woakes continues coding it in March of next year.










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NEWS

NINJA MAGIC

SYSTEM 3's massive selling 8-bit oriental arcade adventure was promised on ST and Amiga almost a year ago, but it failed to materialise. However there's good news ... for ST owners at least. The **Last Ninja** is virtually complete (straight up) and is very likely to hit your screens early next year.

Unfortunately, it currently occupies SIX disks for 1040 STs only – over 4Mb – so the programmers are busily compacting it as we speak. System 3 supremo Mark Cale reckons an Amiga version is out of the question, as it would occupy, he says, 10 disks!

The sequel, **Ninja 2**, on the other hand, should certainly appear on both machines, although not until at least the middle of '89.

At last it's here (but unfortunately only for ST owner). System 3's conversion of their original 8-bit classic The Last Ninja.



PC

1	(1)	FLIGHT SIMULATOR 3 (Sublogic)
2	(3)	PSION CHESS (Psion)
3=	(2)	GUNSHIP (Microprose)
3=	(6)	BEYOND ZORK (Activis-ion/ Infocom)
5	(RE)	TEST DRIVE (Electronic Arts)
6	(4)	CHUCK YAEGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER (Electronic Arts)
7=	(9)	STARFLIGHT (Electronic Arts)
7=	(RE)	THE HITCHHIKERS' GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (Activision/ Infocom)
7=	(5)	THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER (Grandslam)
10=	(8)	GRAND SLAM BRIDGE (Electronic Arts)
10=	(7)	WORLD TOUR GOLF (Electronic Arts)

Compiled exclusively for The One by Software Circus Ltd, The Plaza On Oxford Street, 120 Oxford Street, London W1N 9DP. Tel: 01 436 2811.

MONST

Golden Goblins will be making its debut soon with a novel effort entitled **The Grand Monster Slam**, a sport simulation with a difference; it's set in a JR Tolkein style fantasy world filled with goblins and hobbits. **The Grand Monster Slam** is an annual sports tournament between all the hardest monsters, which consists of several mini games and a main competition. Every fancied trying your hand at the noble art of bomb-punching? Well that's exactly what you'll have to go through if you want to qualify for **The Grand Monster Slam**, a weird cross between football and tennis with fantasy elements thrown in for good measure.



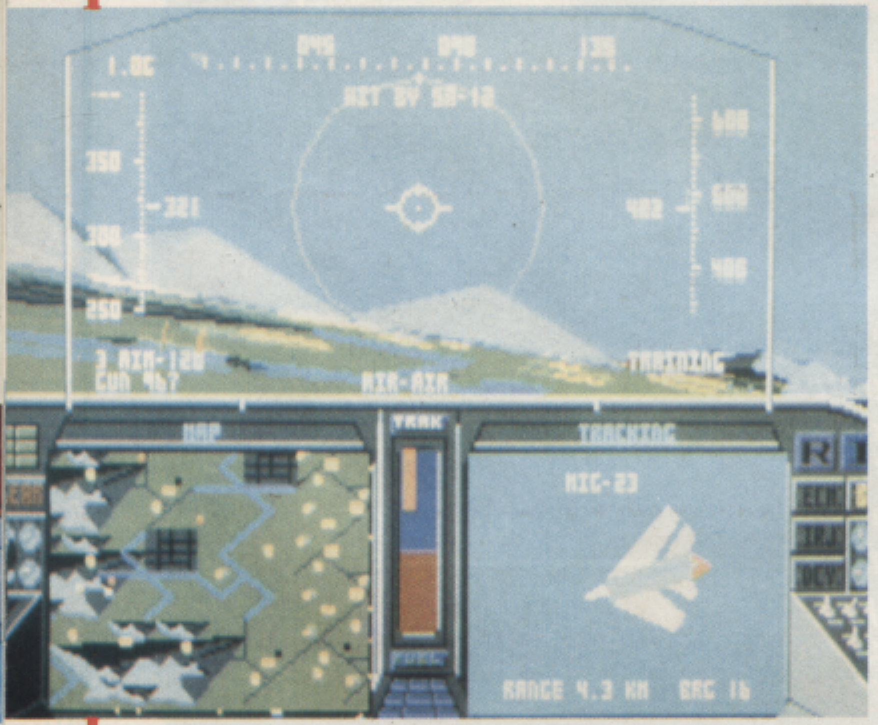
IT DOESN'T EXIST

The US Air Force's top secret radar-invisible stealth fighter is the subject of Microprose's latest simulation epic F-19. It's loosely based around the company's 8-bit title **Project Stealth Fighter,** a simulation of the same plane.

Although the Air Force won't even admit that the F-19 exists, and there aren't any photographs of it, Microprose claims that it's come up with a pretty accurate simulation of the fabled fighter.

It may be impossible to make real life comparisons, but the game looks very promising and may even give the superlative **Falcon** (reviewed this issue) a run for its money. The PC version is already complete, with ST and Amiga versions scheduled to appear sometime next year.

Also in the pipeline is **Microprose Soccer,** the company's first sports simulation. Designed for the C64 by Sensible Software (the crew that originated **SEUCK** and **Wizball**), the 16-bit upgrades should make their first appearance in early 1989.



Getting ready to buzz the Golden Gate bridge at Mach 3 in Microprose's controversial flight simulation F-19 Stealth Fighter.



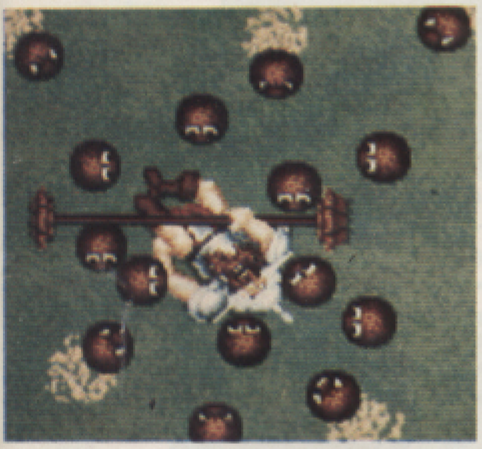


MANDA

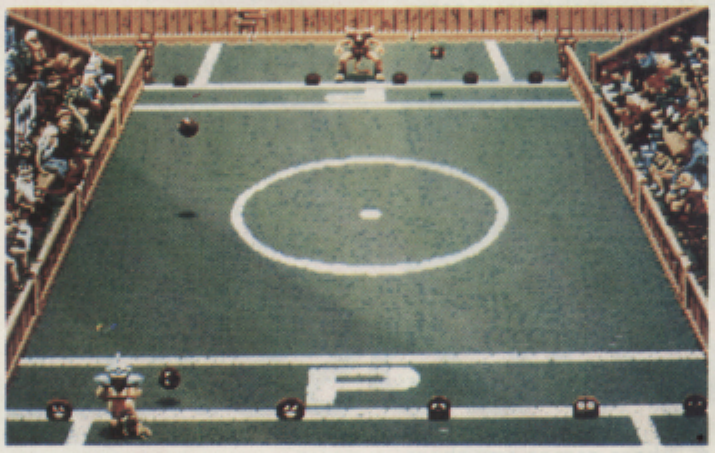
Mandarin Software, which had its first success recently with **STOS**, has undertaken its first licensed game, albeit an unlikely one. **Lombard/RAC Rally**, as the name suggests, is a racing game around the famous Rally. The player is placed behind the wheel

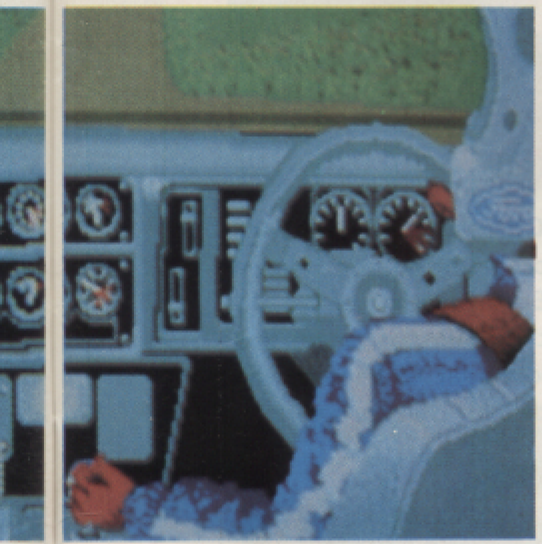


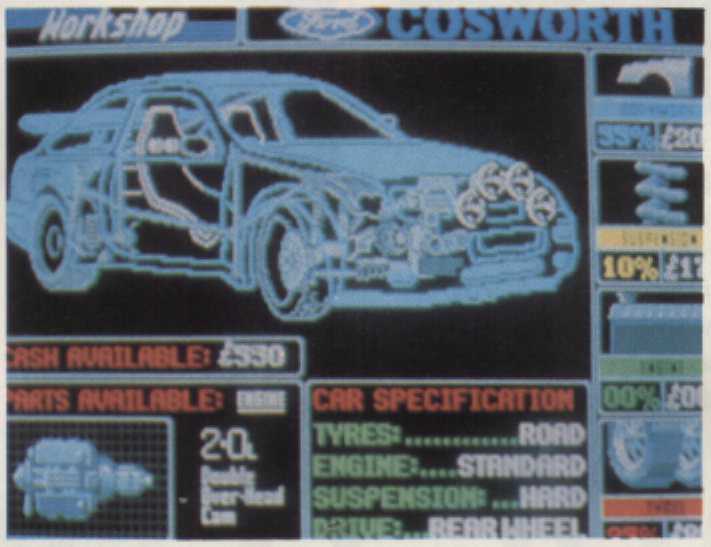
ER MASH



If medieval sports simulations don't take your fancy and you'd like to try something a little more down to earth, how about joining the circus? **Circus Attractions** puts the player through Knife Throwing, High Diving, Tightrope Walking, Trampolining and Juggling. Again, it's a sports simulation with a difference, and it has to be said that the graphics look wonderful, but how it compares with Tynesoft's forthcoming **Circus Games** remains to be seen. Both **The Grand Master Slam** and **Circus Attractions** will be released in the early part of next year.









ARIN'S DRIVING FORCE

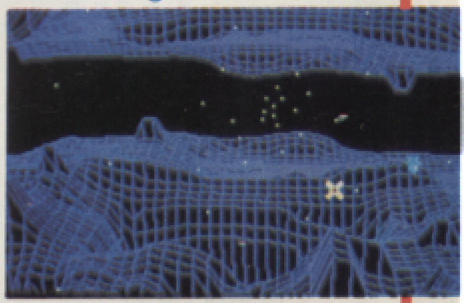
of a souped-up Sierra Cosworth, and allowed to drive in all kinds of conditions, including dense forests, mountains, night-time and so on.

A novel workshop feature, where the car can be customised to suit the variable terrains, is also included. RAC rally drivers who have assisted in the game's development, claim that it's an accurate simulation of the real thing. **Lombard/RAC Rally** should just be appearing in the shops as you read this, as should **Pioneer Plague,** also from Mandarin.

Programmed by Bill Williams, previously known for writing **Mindwalker** and **Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon** for Cinemaware, **Pioneer Plague** is the first game on the Amiga to make full use of its unique Hold and Modify (HAM) mode that allows 4096 colours to be displayed on screen at once.

A linked series of sub-games combine to make a huge space adventure with shoot 'em up and arcade adventure overtones. Manderin is making a lot of noise about **Pioneer Plague**'s dazzling technical specification, but just how well the game actually plays remains to be seen.

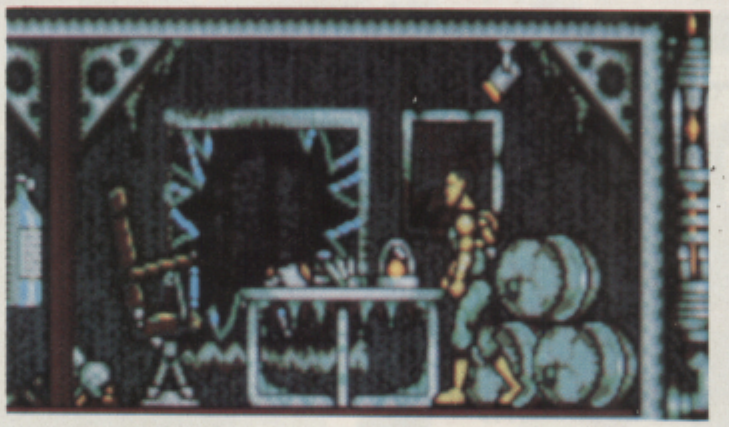
Pioneer Plague



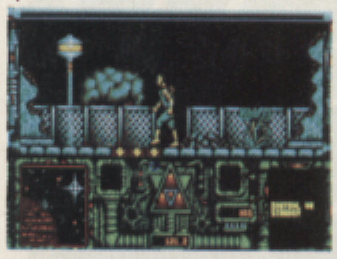
'INSIDE' STORY

Fancy a spot of Porridge? That's what's on offer from newcomer Chrysalis, in the form of its debut product, **Prison.** Prison takes the form of an arcade adventure set on a distant colony planet.

As the latest exile to arrive, your only chance of retaining your sanity is to search the planet for the scattered sections of a long-lost spaceship in order to make your escape.



Prison looks set to give Rainbird's Verminator a run for its money in the graphics stakes.



Chrysalis may be a new name, but the company has a long history as a software producer. Formerly known solely as Teque Software, the company was responsible for the development of such awesome turkeys as Grandslam's **Terramex** and **Peter Beardsley's Football.** On the other hand it was also behind the excellent **Pac-Mania** conversion, so it's obviously capable of producing above average products.

1	(NE)	BATTLE CHESS (Electronic Arts/Interplay)
2	(2)	INTERCEPTOR (Electronic Arts)
3	(1)	MENACE (Psyganosis/Psyclapse)
4	(NE)	ROCKET RANGER (Mirrorsoft/Cinemaware)
5	(6)	FERRARI FORMULA 1 (Electronic Arts)
6	(10)	STARRAY (Logotron)
7	(NE)	DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE (Ocean)
8	(7)	FIREPOWER (Activision/Micro Illusions)
9	(3)	CHRONO QUEST (Psygnosis)
10	(4)	POW (Actionware)

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COLOSSAL!

Chess games are chess games, right? Wrong! A world of difference separates the hordes of chess programs that have been written since the dawn of computing history.

The difference may be subtle, but they matter a great deal to serious chess enthusiasts who mostly like to be left to their own devices in a challenging and gimmick-free game.

Probably for this reason, **Colossus IV** was one of the best-selling chess games of all time across the range of 8-bit computers.

Now, with the release of **Colossus X,** 16-bit owners can enjoy a similar game, albeit with enhanced features and a few remarkable additions. For instance, the program actually learns as it plays, so there's little or no danger of any player ever outgrowing it. If the player executes a series of moves that's not contained in Colossus' library, the program immediately memorises it for later use,





Colossus X has been programmed by Martin Bryant (author of the entire **Colossus** range), and looks set to become the definite chess program.

COMPETITION

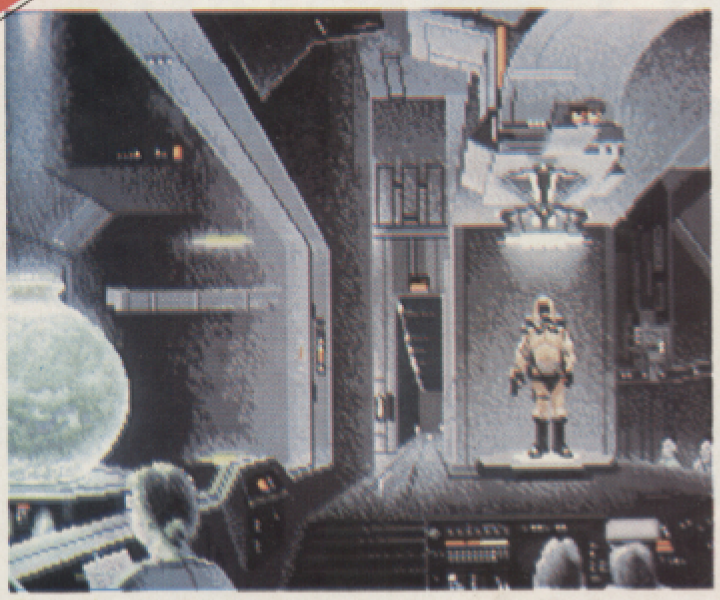


WIN A FISH!

Here's your oppor-tuna-ty to win a copy of Magnetic Scroll's latest adventure in our of-fish-ial competition. We've got 10 copies of the game to give away along with 10 limited edition Telecomsoft T-Shirts. What we want you to do is come up with suitably fish-related song titles, five in all. To get you going we've provided you with a few examples. How about: I Haddock-razy Dream? Or perhaps Salmon-chanted evening? How about the old Welsh choir classic Whale Kipper Whelk Home In The Eel Side? When you've got five FUNNY song titles, skate down to the post of-fish and send them to SOUNDS FISHY, The one, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU to arrive no later than December 28th.


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IT'S A BLAST!



Terrarium

In the space of a few short months, Image Works has built up an impeccable reputation as a developer and publisher of original material. Now the company is about to dive into more treacherous waters with the release of its first coin-op conversion, **Blasteroids** – the late 80's descendent of the all-time classic **Asteroids.**

Blasteroids first appeared in British arcades this February, but was slightly lost in the glut of major products that was doing the rounds at that time (**Operation Wolf, Afterburner,** etc). The gameplay retains the essence of the original – destroy the spinning rocks before they destroy you – but adds a number of extras, including four new levels (warps) and a host of new enemies and asteroids.

As the coin-op was driven by a 68000 processor, Teque Software (the company responsible for conversion) was able to take the source code and use it almost intact for the conversion. The original's 16 colour digitised graphics have been retained for the Amiga version (despite the fact that they originally arrived in Image Works' office on no less than 10 disks!), but had to be reduced to four colours for the ST.

Further news from Image Works is that work is well under way on **Terrarium,** a graphic adventure set in the verdant insides of a large bottle (like one of those miniature gardens that yuppies keep in their sitting rooms). Although we've not yet seen any of the game mechanics, the still pictures are well up to scratch. Splinter Vision is the company responsible for the coding and if the finished game matches up to the high visual standard, then it should be a real stunner.



Terrarium



Stand by for a blast from the past. . . Image Works' forthcoming ST conversion of the brilliant Atari coin-op Blasteroids**, due for release next year.**

14

BLADE'S

Flying fast in **Afterburner's** vapour trail comes US Gold's conversion of another Sega flight extravaganza, **Thunderblade.** The home computer conversion is being carried out by Manchester-based development house Tiertex, which was previously responsible for the lacklustre conversions of **Rolling Thunder** and **Street Fighter.**

However, **Thun-derblade's** project manager, Donald Campbell, is confident that it will be its best 16-bit project to date. After five months of work, the ST version should just about be complete as you read this, while the Amiga version is about a week behind.





MAGIC BITES BACK

German development house Magic Bytes has jumped onto the ever-popular cartoon licence bandwagon by acquiring the rights to **Tom and Jerry,** perhaps the best known cartoon duo of all time.

The game, scheduled for a February release, takes the form of a one or two-player arcade adventure that Magic Bytes hopes will capture the original atmosphere of MGM's classic cartoon. The player takes on the role of Jerry whose goal is simply to stop himself from becoming one of the main ingredients in Tom's Mouse and Peanut Butter sandwiches.

Tom and Jerry bears a striking resemblance to **Pink Panther,** an earlier Magic Bytes effort, although it will be more of a slapstick affair with bonus points awarded for leading Tom into traps and so on.

Also in the Magic Bytes pipeline is **Persian Gulf Inferno.** An oil rig in the middle east has been overrun by terrorists who have taken five VIPs as hostages. A rescue attempt fails when the two helicopters carrying the anti-terrorist team to the rig collide and there is only one survivor who must tackly the terrorists alon.

The game may sound a lot like Inforgrames' **Hostages,** but is presented very differently, as an arcade adventure cum shoot 'em up cum puzzle game over 220 scrolling screens. Slated for a June release, **Persian Gulf Inferno** boasts eight-way scrolling and over 500 character animations.

ST

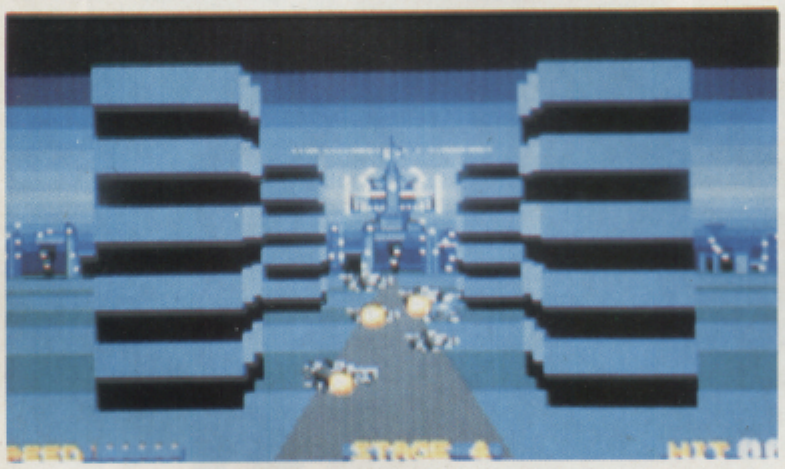
1	(1)	STARGLIDER II (Rainbird)
2	(NE)	ELITE (Firebird)
3	(2)	DUNGEON MASTER (Mirrorsoft/FTL)
4	(NE)	DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE (Ocean)
5=	(9)	MICKEY MOUSE (Gremlin)
5=	(RE)	THE PAWN (Rainbird)
5=	(3)	SIDEWINDER (Mastertronic)
8	(8)	OUTRUN (US Gold)
9	(RE)	TEST DRIVE (Electronic Arts)
10	(RE)	THE HITCHHIKERS' GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (Activision/Infocom)

Compiled by Software Circus Ltd, The Plaza On Oxford Street, 120 Oxford Street, London W1N 9DP. Tel: 01 436 2811.

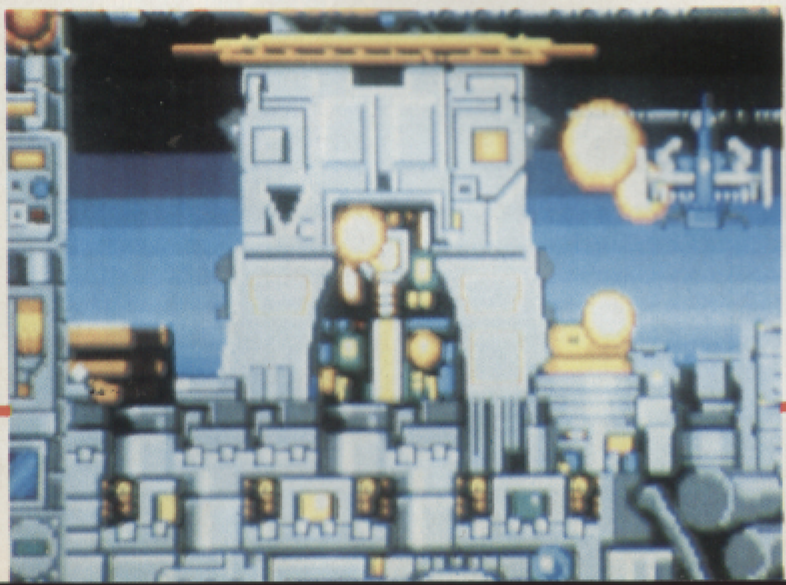
What an earth is that weird object that Tom is wielding? Whatever it is it's making poor little Jerry look abnormally worried. Better get out of there fast!



'S A RUNNER



Guide your chopper throug the tortuous canyons and pepsi-logo infested cityscapes in US Gold's conversion of the cult Sega coin-op Thunderblade.



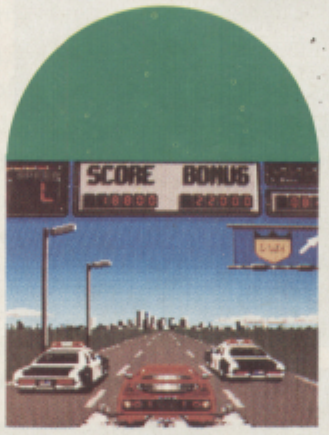
STILL CRAZY



Surely your £200,000 Ferrari F40 can outrun those clapped-out police jalopies?

AMONG the first **OutRun** clones to appear was Titus Software's **Crazy Cars,** which didn't exactly set reviewers hearts thumping, but apparently captured the imagination of the buying public. Titus now expects to follow this success with the follow up called – you guessed it – **Crazy Cars II.**

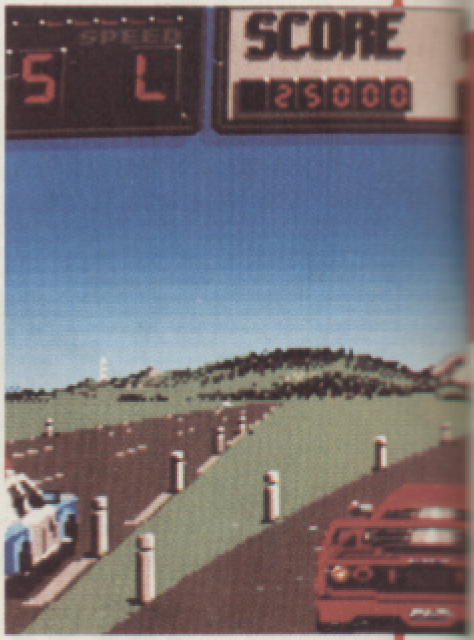
Anther racing game, CCII let you loose in a Ferrari F40 as you cruise the streets in an attempt to smash a ring of car thieves. The thieves aren't your only opposition though, policemen from both sides of the fence



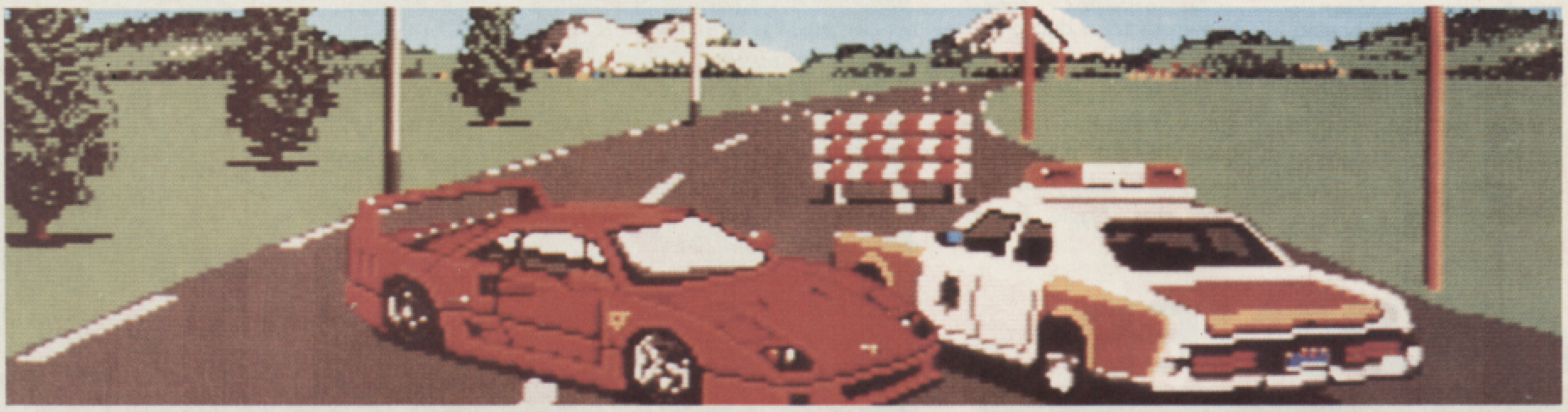
don't exactly take kindly to this vigilantism and attempt to put a stop to your joy-ride.

Road blocks, junctions, car chases, maps and 360 degree spins, are all promised. **Crazy Cars II** should be in the shops early in December, just in time for the Christmas rush.

Another Titus game which is due on the shelves at roughly the same time is **Galactic Conqueror,** the first game from the company that's not a driving simulation. A unique combination of 3D arcade action and strategy is promised, with a ground fight, an aerial fight and a space fight to be negotiated in each level.



Get into the layby and try to OutRun(!) that pursuing lawman.



HEWSON GOES MEDIEVAL

ARCADE adventures are becoming increasingly popular on the ST and Amiga, with Hewson's latest release looking set to continue this trend. **Astaroth** is set in a fantastic medieval world with the player cast as Ozymandias (not the character from Watchmen!), a hapless warrior trapped inside a haunted crypt.

Hewson's Astaroth



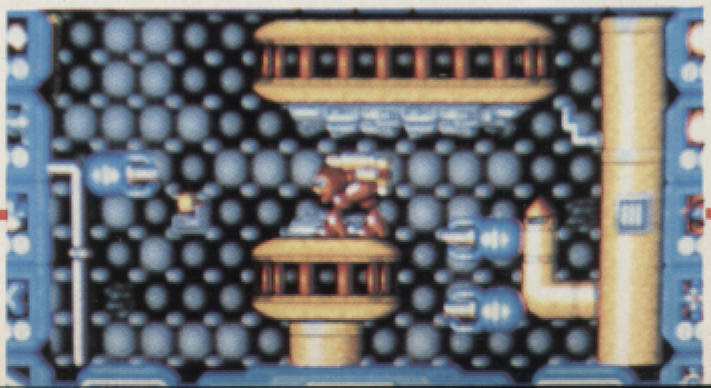


The author of **Astaroth** is Mark Dawson, whose previous successes include the 8-bit classics **Robin Of The Wood** and **Nodes Of Yesod,** while the ever-popular artist Pete Lyon has supplied the graphics. **Astaroth** should be released any day now, so watch out for the full review in issue four.

Nigel Browjohn, creator of Rainbird's soon-to-be-released **Verminator** has also been working on a 16-bit project for Hewson, tentativley titled **Kalashnikov,** that looks to be even better than Hewson's **Cybernoid.** It's a multi-directional scrolling blast 'em up played over 750 screens.

A review will hopefully follow next month.

Frenetic shooting and mayhem in Kalashnikov.





HIT HARD!
HIT OUT!
HIT BACK!
SURE HIT!

Fight your way through this stunning sequel to International Karate. Spectacular animated backgrounds, amazing new moves including double head-kick and bone-bending backflips. This must be an ultimate hit; at the sure hit; not against one but two opponents!

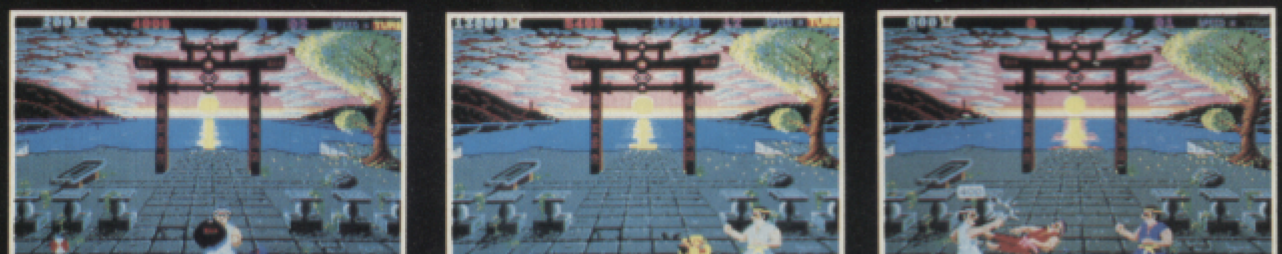
Out of all the fighting games that have appeared since the ST hit the streets, International Karate + is undoubtedly the best.

Gallons on gratuitous fightin' and fumpin' fun to be had here.

Watch out for many neat touches, such as falling leaves, leaping fish, birds, spiders, inch-worms and even a periscope!

There's plenty more too - all activated via the keyboard. Leave the fighters alone or press 'T' and their trousers end up around their ankles!

Now available on Atari ST £24.99 - also available on Commodore 64 cassette & disc, Spectrum, Amstrad cassette and disc.



Mail Order: SYSTEM 3, Blenheim House, Ashill Drive, Pinner, MIDDLESEX HA5 2AE. Consumer Enquiries/Technical Support: 01-886 5692

SYSTEM 3

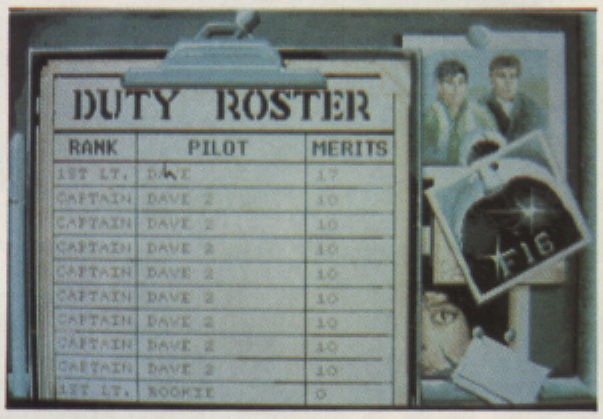


Spectrum Holobyte's jet fighter simulation scooped armfuls of awards when it was originally released on the Apple Macintosh and IBM PC, but how does the long-awaited ST conversion shape up? Gary Whitta, call sign Motor Mouth, has bogies all over him.

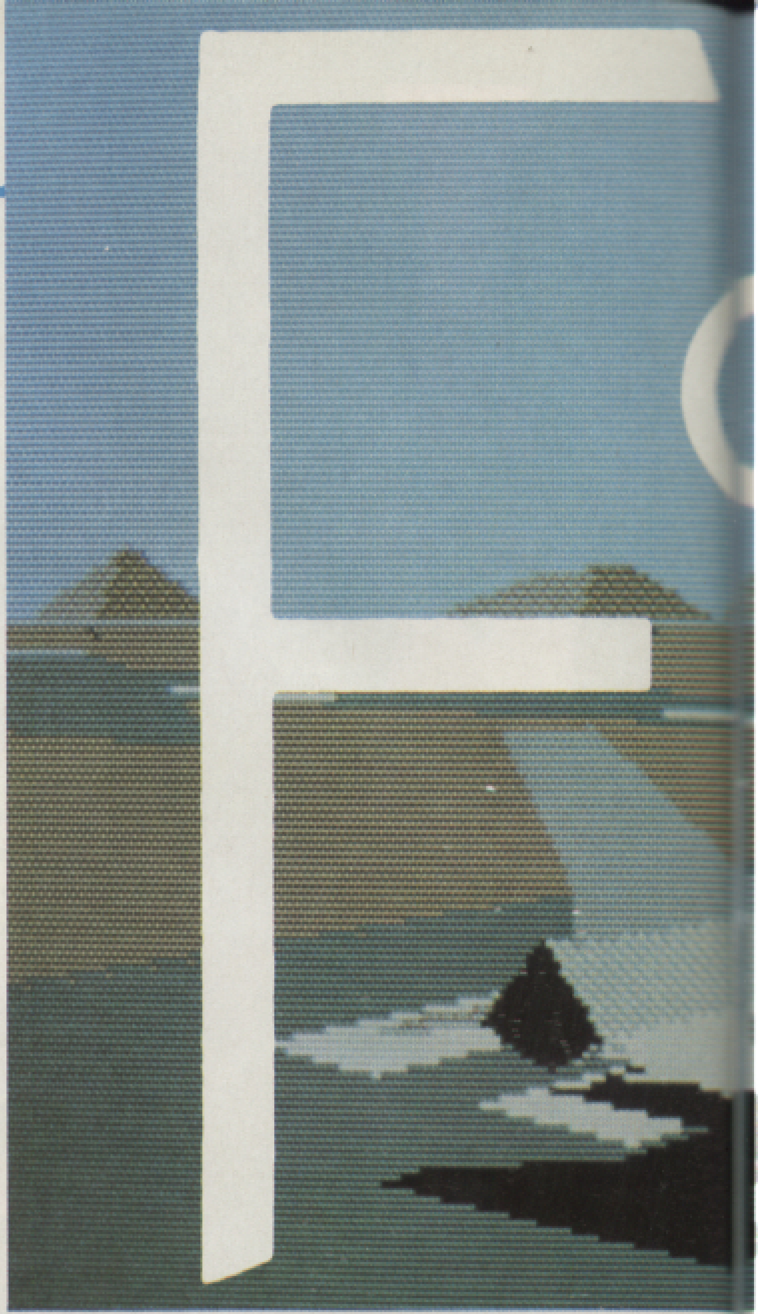
The General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon is the pride of the United States Air Force and is generally considered to be one of the greatest jet fighters in the world. Its staggering capabilities make it the ideal subject for a flight simulation and it has already appeared in a number of games including Electronic Arts' **F/A-18 Interceptor** (alongside the F-18 Hornet). The first game to focus directly on the F-16, however is **Falcon**, developed and programmed by US-based simulation specialists Spectrum Holobyte, producers of **Gato** and **PT-109**.

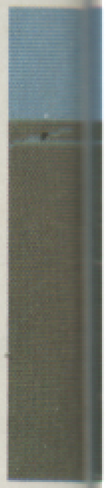
The Apple Macintosh and IBM PC versions were received to much press acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic, and such was the accuracy of the simulation, the US Air Force even adopted it as a pilot trainer! The attention generated by the original led to Spectrum Holobyte commissioning conversions to the ST and Amiga and the job was given to a team of British programmers, who have produced what are unquestionably the best versions yet.

Falcon is strictly a military simulation, with the player cast as an aspiring F-16 pilot stationed in Nevada. Although there is no specific end goal, the basic objective is to earn merits, win medals and get promoted by flying successful missions over the enemy territory. Having signed onto the duty roster (where pilots' careers are stored on disk), a difficulty level is chosen by selecting a rank for the pilot from a list of five: First Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel. Higher ranks make for a more accurate simulation; enemy fighters are more deadly, armaments weigh the plane down and it becomes much easier to crash or make fatal errors.



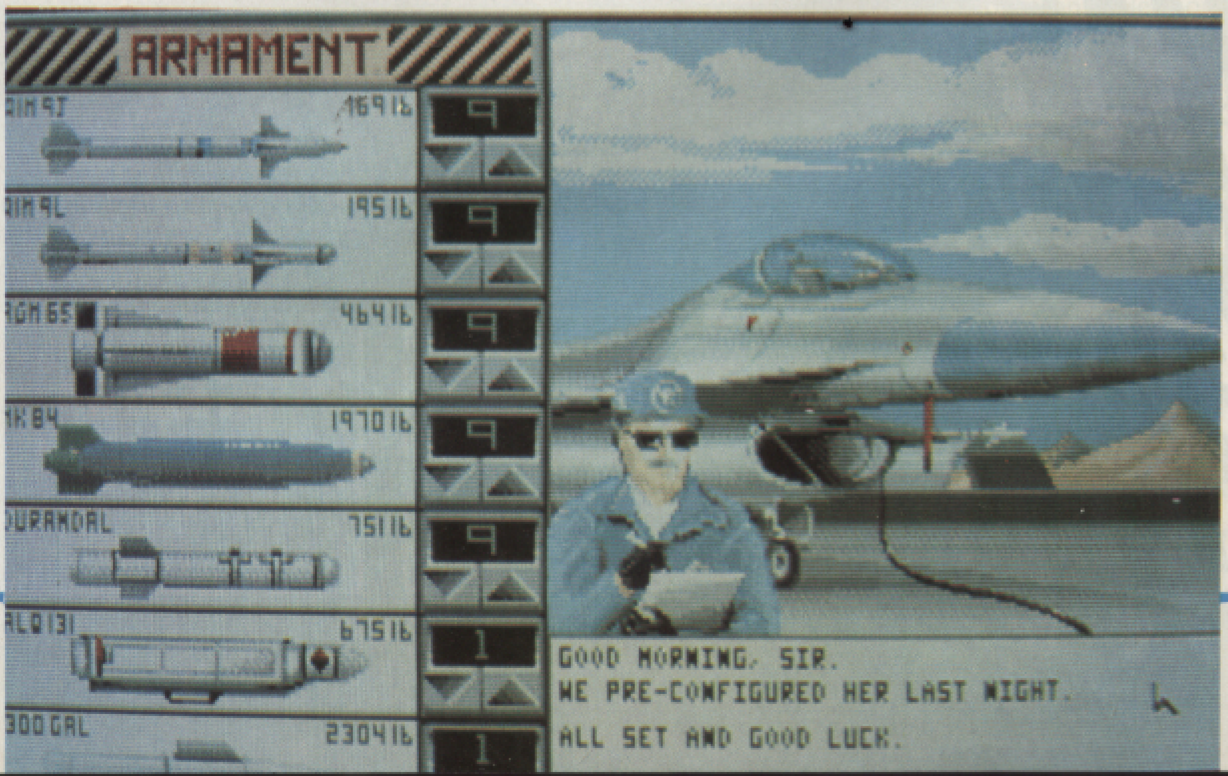






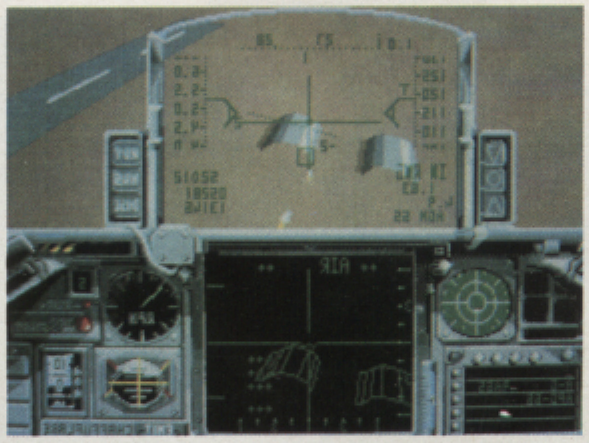
The first game to allow the player to view the plane from the outside was EA's Interceptor. The effect was pleasing but limited as the views available were restricted to just a few preset positions around the plane. Falcon takes the outside view idea and expands it. The player is allowed to view his fighter from almost any point by rotating the imaginary tracking camera around the plane with the 'O' key. The option is extremely useful for getting a better look at your surroundings and spotting any rogue MiGs that may be approaching.

Meet Sarge, your chief fighter technician and armaments co-ordinator. Through him you can arm your plane to suit the mission you're about to fly. Just select the weapon you want, and Sarge will have it fitted for you (provided there are enough left in the stores). Sarge isn't just a mechanic though, he knows more about fighters than most pilots ever will and won't hesitate to inform you if he thinks you're overloading the plane. Treat him with respect and listen to his advice and you've got a better chance of coming back alive.



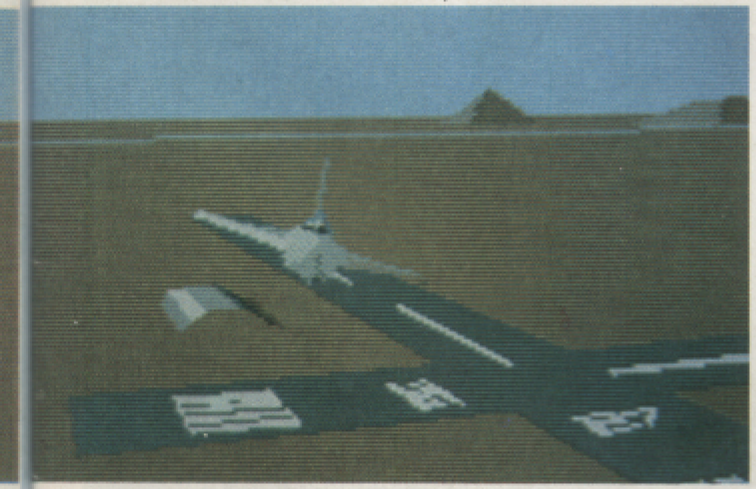
alcon

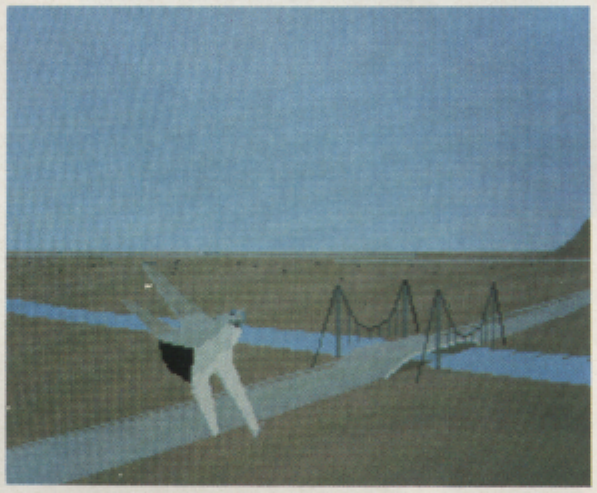


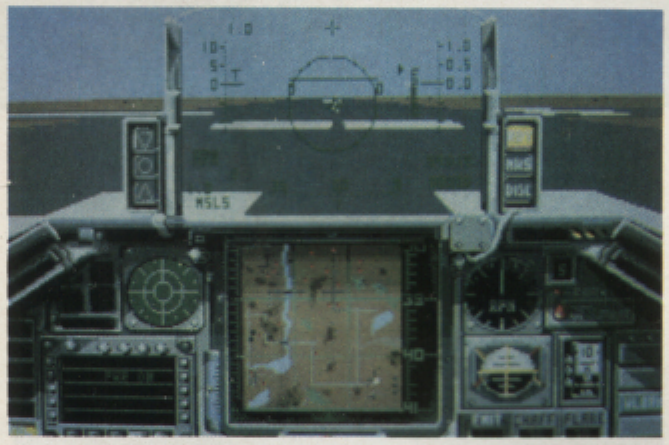


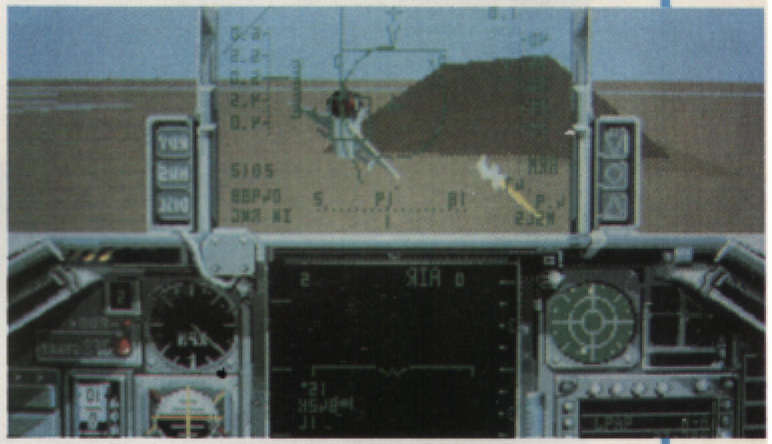
The F16 Falcon **has the most advanced 'Heads Up Display' of any US jet fighter, and all its features have been reproduced in** Falcon's **HUD. It's so clever it almost thinks for itself: acquiring visual targets via radar with the press of a key; showing the direction the pilot needs to fly to find the nearest MiG in the area, and accessing a variety of target acquisition and lock-on systems. The cursors provided in 'Bomb' mode are automatically calculated to make aiming easier and even tell you when to drop the bomb. When in 'Cannon' mode, a line known as the 'snake' is provided which believe it or not, plots and displays the exact line along which cannon fire will fall when strafing the ground!**

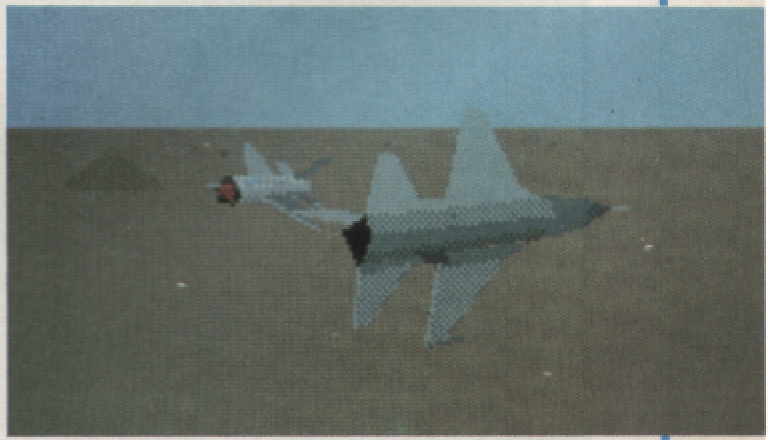
Uh-oh! A soviet Mikoyan Guryevich (MiG)-21 has appeared in the 'Black Bandit' mission and your job is to shoot it out of the sky. Forget the puny dot-like enemy aircraft seen in earlier combat simulations, in Falcon **the MiGs buzz right past the cockpit in true Top Gun style. The attention to detail on the MiGs, and the speed at which they move is astounding.**



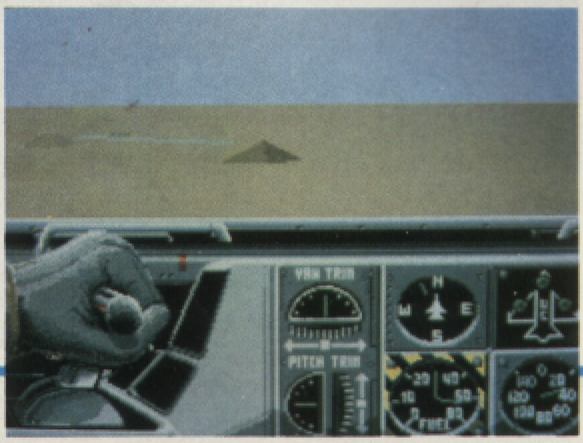


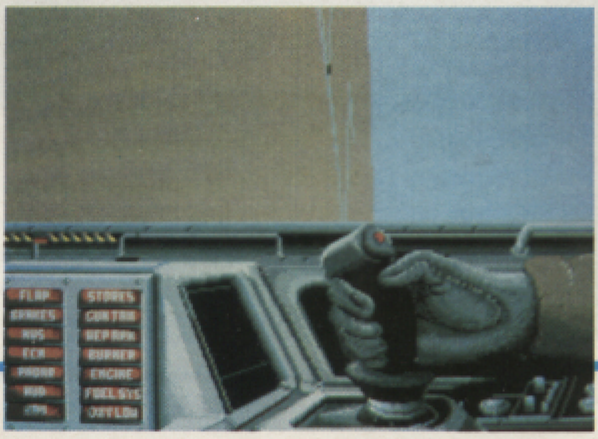


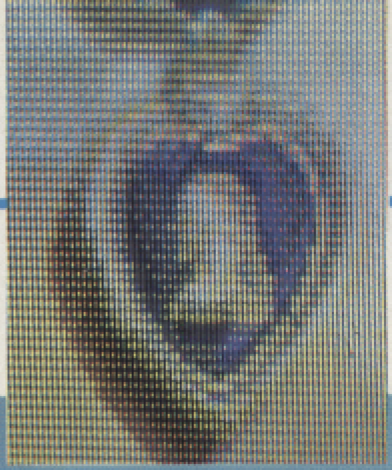


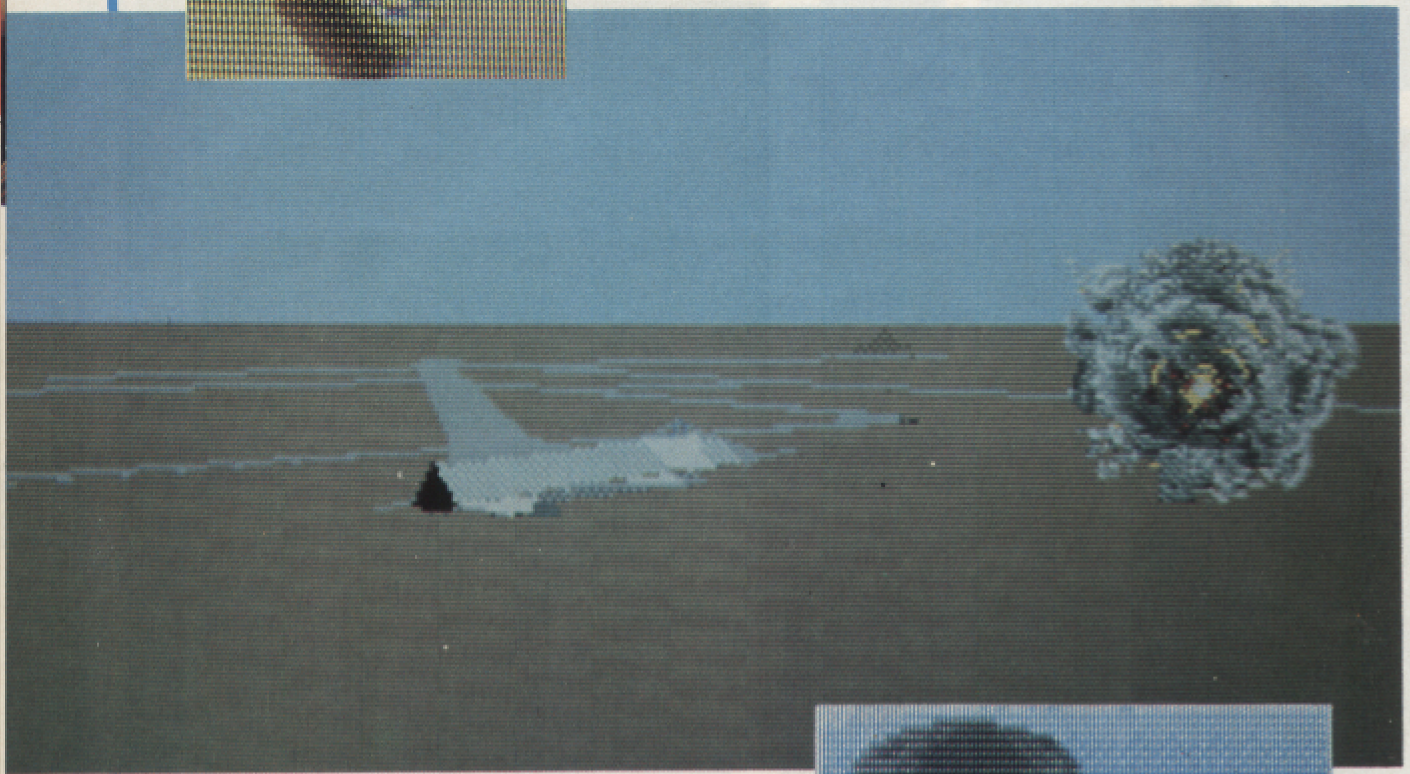


Falcon's **emphasis is on accuracy, and as such the cockpit and HUD instrumentation is some of the most detailed yet seen in a simulation. As well as the obligatory artificial horizon, radar and so on,** Falcon's **cockpit and instrumentation is an exact replica of the real thing. There are, in fact, so many dials, guages and readings that the cockpit is divided into three separate screens. The main front screen shows the majority of the controls, while the two side screens depict damage indicators, compass heading, fuel levels.**





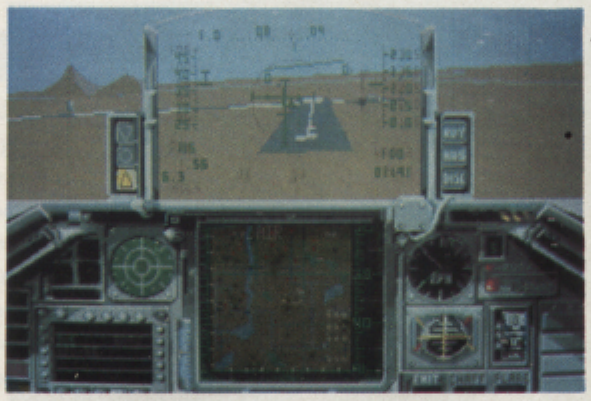




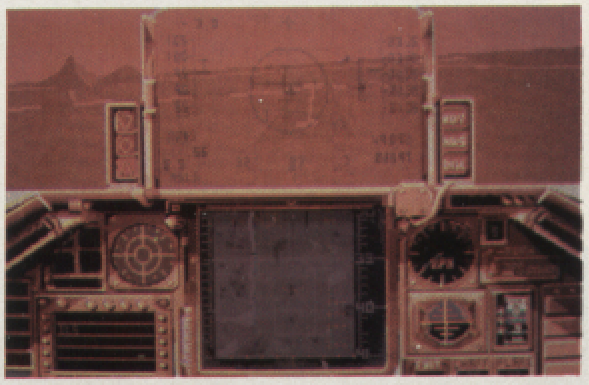
Bingo! The MiG-21, takes a sidewinder missile up the exhaust and explodes in a ball of flame before screaming to the ground, leaving a trail of black smoke behind. It's worth killing the bandit just for the experience of hearing the excellent speech: "Bluebird, splash one MiG," yells the computer as the ruthless Ruskie bites the dust.

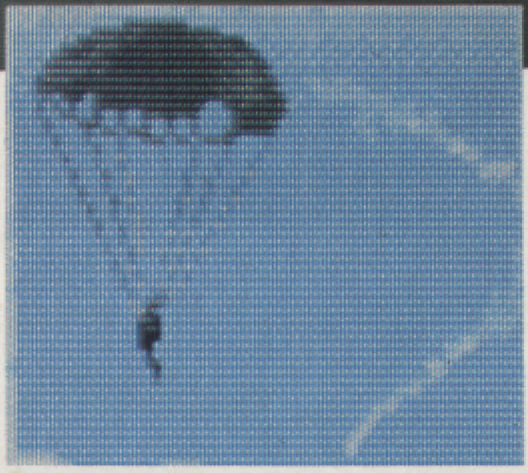


Ask any pilot the hardest part of flying a plane and he'll say landing. Fortunately our Instrument Landing System (ILS) is on hand to guide you in safely at all times. Keep those crosshairs lined up correctly and you'll have no problems putting the bird down, but one mishap and you're history.

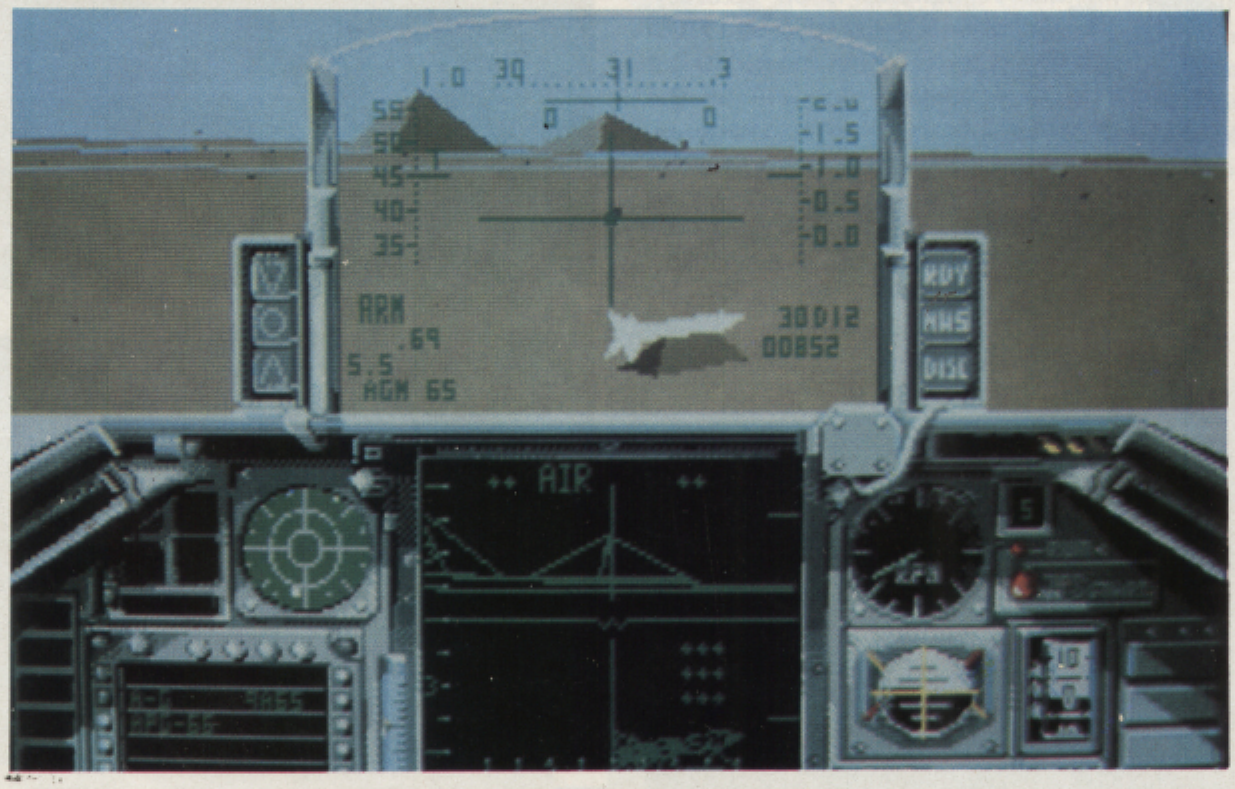


Remember, no matter how good a fighter plane is, its performance is limited to what the pilot can physically stand. Try to fly too fast and pull off a fancy manoeuvre and you will find yourself pulling too many Gs and passing out in a red or black haze. Unless you can right yourself quickly you'll crash before you have time to recover.

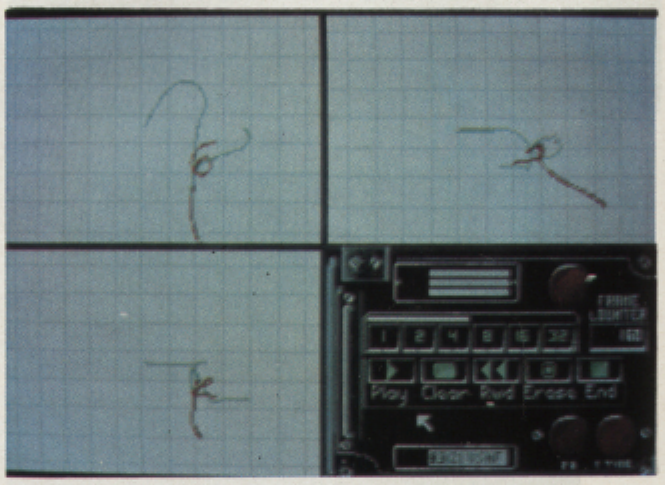




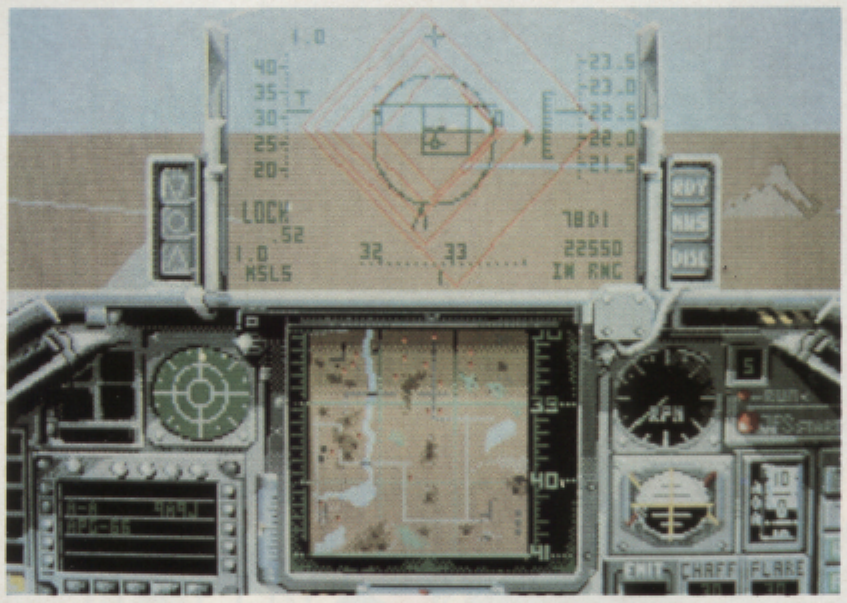
MiGs aren't the only threat to your fighter – on later levels, SAMs (surface to air missiles) begin to pose a threat. If you're not careful to maintain the correct altitude while passing over them, they can get a radar lock on your heat signal. It's extremely difficult to avoid these missiles, even though your HUD will warn you as soon as one is launched.



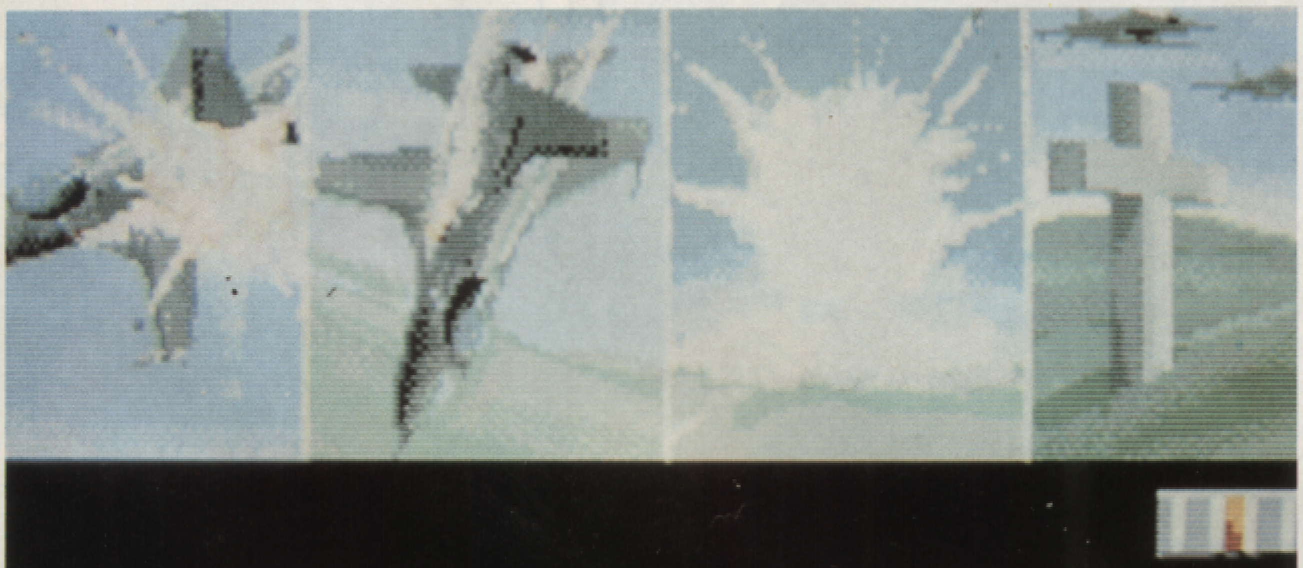
Those in possession of a 1040 ST or an Amiga with 1Mb or more will be able to take advantage of the innovative Black Box feature. This can be called up at any time to replay the flight pattern of your plane on the mission so far in the form of a line graph in three planes, the method used to show demonstration manoeuvres to trainee USAF pilots. The Black Box also shows the flight patterns of any MiGs, enabling pilots to see where they went wrong so they don't make the same mistake in the future.



Ever wanted to execute all those flashy flight tricks shown in the game manual? Well, with ACM (Air Combat Manoeuvres) you can! Just select the one you want to practice and a flight instructor in the plane in front of you will execute it. To help you, a tunnel of red boxes is generated by the HUD that, if flown through correctly, will execute the manoeuvre. Clever, eh?

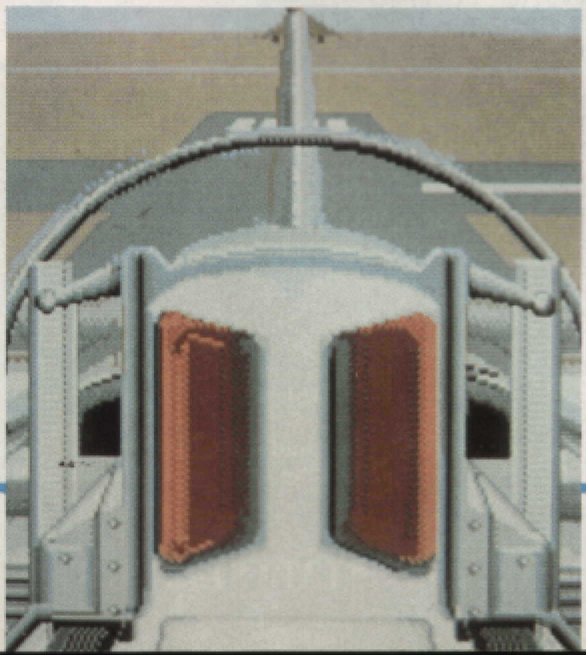


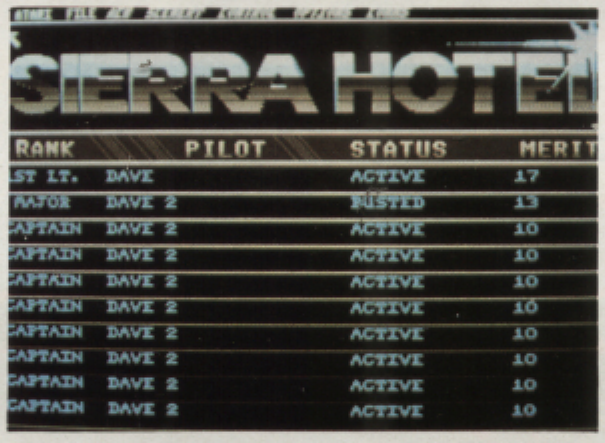




At the end of each mission a series of snapshots is provided to show exactly what happened. Did you survive that enemy missile hit? Were you rescued or did you become a POW behind enemy lines? Or where you REALLY unlucky and court martialled? Only the snapshots will tell.

Who says fighter planes aren't comfy? Actually the chair isn't there for comfort, more for you to eject if the going gets too tough. This back view is also rather useful for spotting MiGs coming in from behind.





Welcome to Sierra Hotel, where Falcon's greatest pilots reside on disk. Win enough medals, earn enough merits and complete enough missions and you might just be considered worthy enough to enter.

ST For a long time ST owners have had to go without a decent flight simulation for their machines, but with the release of Falcon that situation is about to change... and how! Falcon is THE greatest flight simulation I've ever played (and I've played quite a few in my time). Whatever way you look at it, Falcon is exemplary. In terms of being an accurate simulation, it is unmatched, not even SubLogic's series of upmarket simulations can claim this kind of accuracy. Graphically it's in a class of its own, with wonderfully defined and speedily animated 3D filled graphics that beat anything that has gone before. The sound, with engine noises sampled from real F-16s and superlative speech, is of a similarly high quality. Even the 140 page manual is a work of art. The armaments stage adds depth to the game and the five different skill levels will help to provide a long-lasting challenge. Just try even taking off successfully at Colonel level. It's extremely user-friendly and easy to get into, with a huge array of options' even allowing two players to dogfight with each other via a modem! Falcon is wonderful... undoubtedly the most impressive 16-bit release to date.

PRICE:	£29.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	93%
SOUND	92%
VALUE	94%
PLAYABILITY	90%

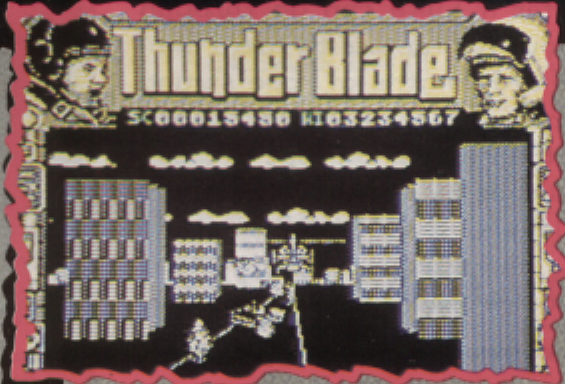
OVERALL 93%

A The bells and whistles are being applied right now – so the finished product should be available about a week after the ST. The only changes are likely to be slightly clearer speech and (perhaps) faster graphics.



Screen shots from various formats.



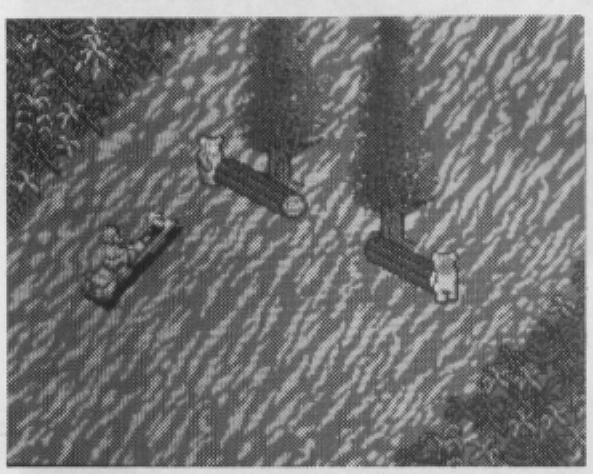


Return Of The Jedi

When Tengen's coin-op version of **Return Of The Jedi** first appeared in the arcades, the playing public was considerably surprised. This was mostly because it bore no resemblance at all to its predecessors, **Star Wars** and **The Empire Strikes Back**, both of which were vector graphic shoot 'em ups.

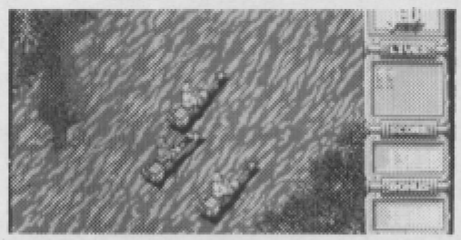
In the film the renegade band of rebel soldiers attempted to destroy a new improved Death Star recently constructed by the hideous Galactic Empire. The computer game gives you the same task in the form of three sub-games, presented sequentially and played over a series of diagonally-scrolling forced perspective landscapes.

Level One casts you in the role of Luke Skywalker, depicting the part of the film where he and Leia chase imperial scouts through the dense forest of the Century Moon of Endor (from where the Death Star's deflector shield



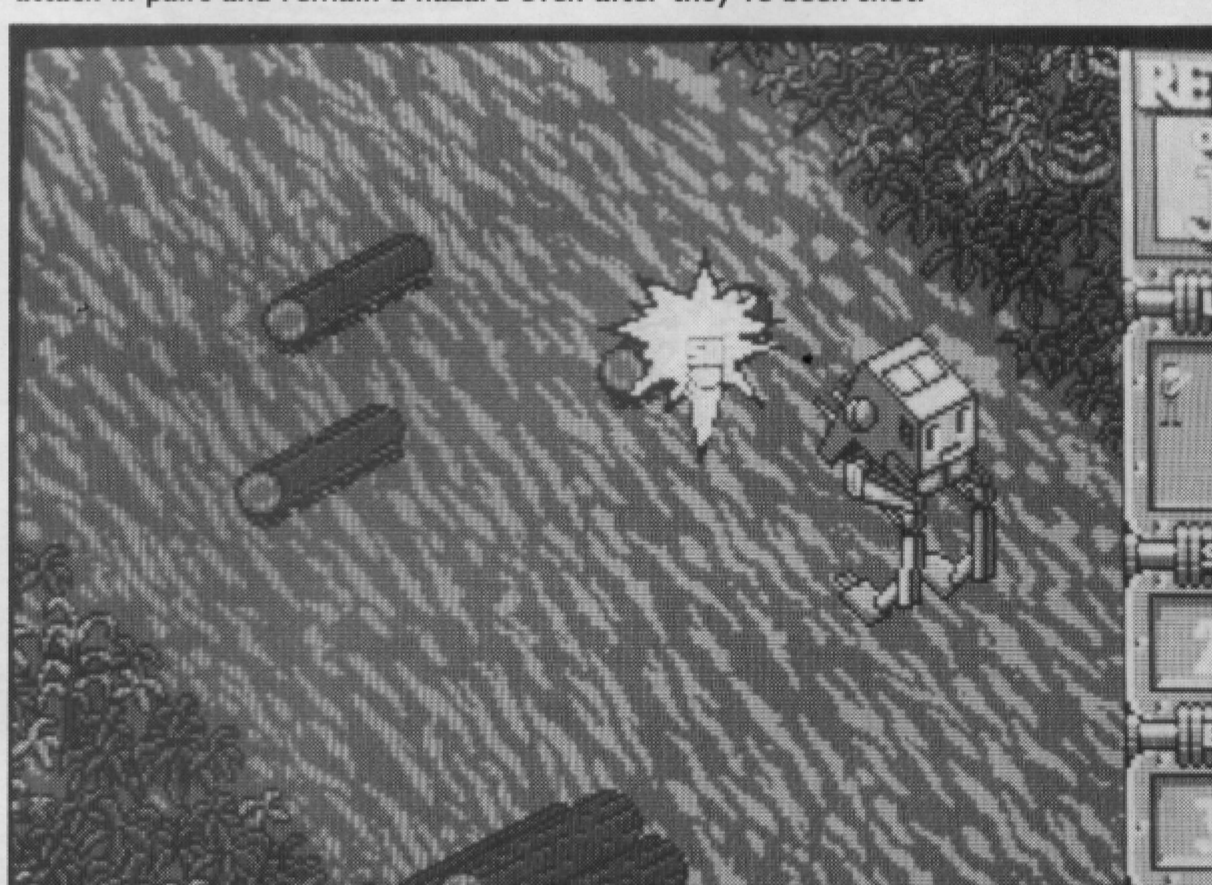
is generated) on hovering speeder bikes. In 'Jedi the game' however, Luke goes it alone. As Luke races through the trees, he is pursued by the biker scouts which he either destroys or avoids.

Along the way, several primitive traps have been set up by the Ewoks (the cute hairy bears that live on Ednor). These are intended to stop the imperial bikers, and bonus points are also on offer if Luke can go through them without falling foul to them himself. There are lengths of rope strung between trees at neck height to knock scouts off their bikes, logs set to crush any scouts that fly between them and on later levels, Ewoks fly past on primitive hang-glider contraptions dropping rocks on the bikers below.



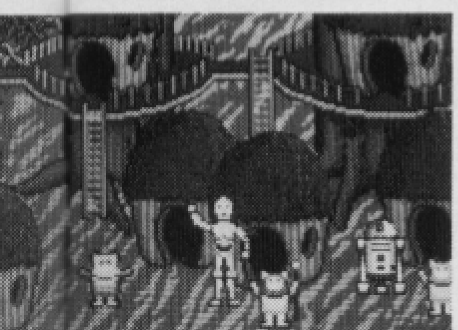
A long time ago in a galaxy far far away... Atari produced the Star Wars trilogy of coin-ops. Domark has brought the first two into your homes, but what about the third and final part? Jedi Master Brian Nesbitt uses the force to find out.





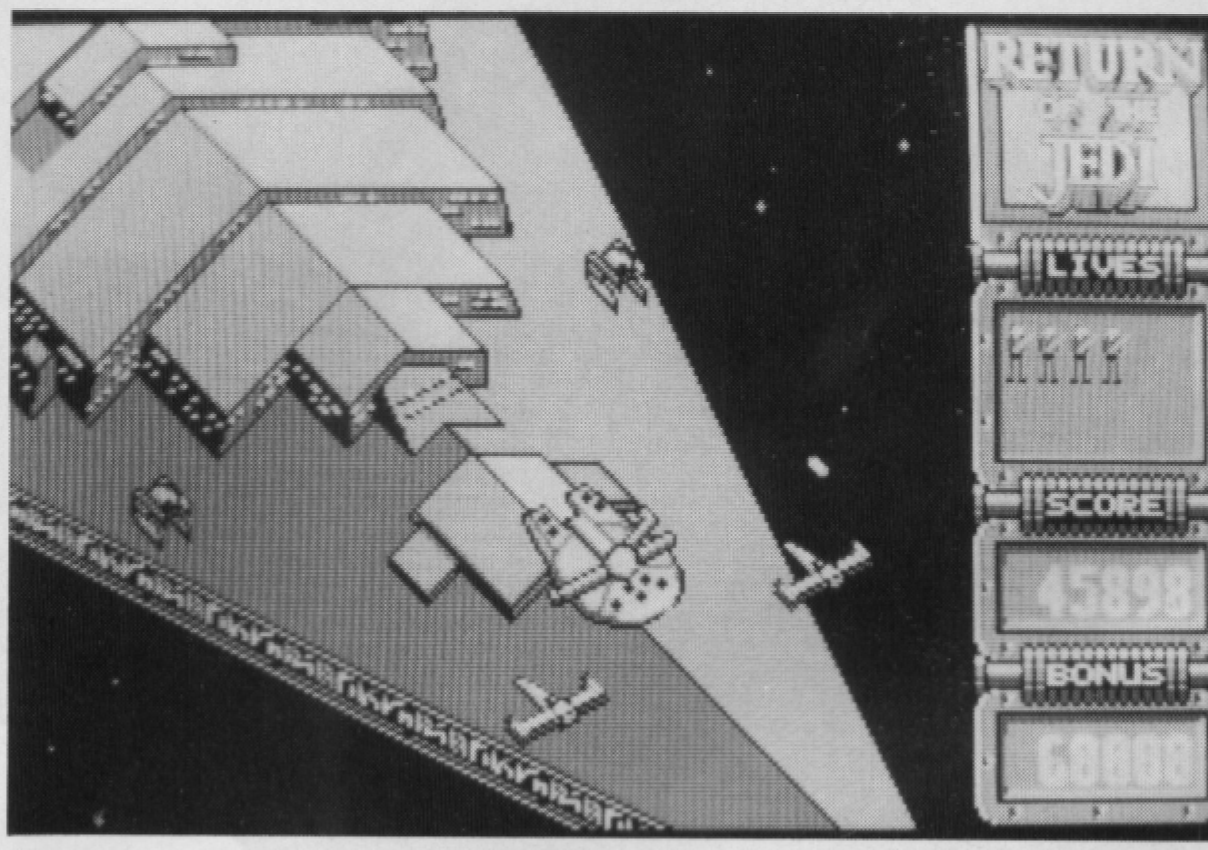
▼In the second phase of the game, the player changes persons to become Chewbacca, who if you remember, stole an Imperial All Terrain Scout Transpot (AT-ST) to help destroy the shield generating bunker. Hazards once again come in the form of Ewok traps intended to knock out genuine AT-STs. Logs are sent rolling towards you, while rocks are hurled from catapults that destroy the walker on impact. Far more formidable than both these two traps are the real Imperial walkers that attack in pairs and remain a hazard even after they've been shot.

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The action in the Imperial Walker section is interspersed by short sequences where the player takes control of the Millenium Flacon and two flanking X-Wings as it flies on strafing runs over the defending Star Destroyers. It's a sequence that is played only for points and is intended to given an effect similar to that of the film, where the action keeps swapping back and forth between the final two battle scenes.

The final sequence takes place once the bunker has been destroyed and the shield has been lowered (which happens automatically when the walker reaches the forest clearing) the player can step into Lando Calrissian's flight boots and launch the fighter attack on the Death Star. In this final section Lando's mission is to fly the Millenium Falcon into Death Star and negotiate the hazards of the infrastructure such as protruding metal tubing, collapsing catwalks and pursuing TIE Fighters before knocking out the central reactor with a burst of laser fire and then flying back out the other way as the space station explodes around you.

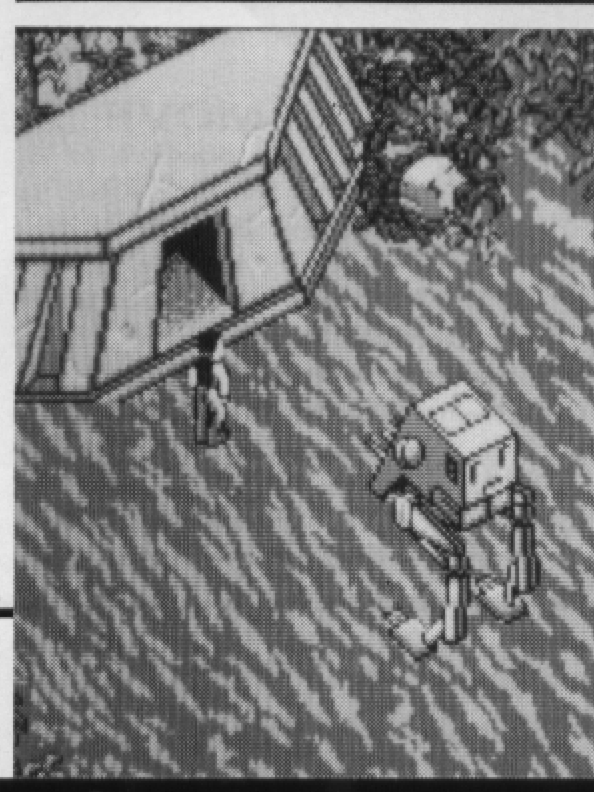


ST

There's no doubt that Return Of The Jedi is a good conversion of the arcade machine. The problem is that it isn't a great game because the coin-op wasn't particularly good in the first place. Tengen could have done so much with the conversion from film to coin-op, such as a real Sega-type race game for the bike section, a Barbarian-style combat game with light sabres between Luke and Vader, and surely the confrontation with Jabba the Hutt should have been included? That said, it isn't bad and the graphics haven't suffered too badly in the conversion. Overall it's competent and the three difficulty levels will help to provide some lasting interest.

PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	64%
SOUND	73%
VALUE	70%
PLAYABILITY	60%

OVERALL 66%



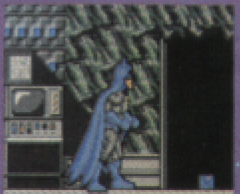
A

Expect to see a version of Return Of The Jedi almost identical to that on the ST, with the only minor differences being slightly enhanced sound and speech.

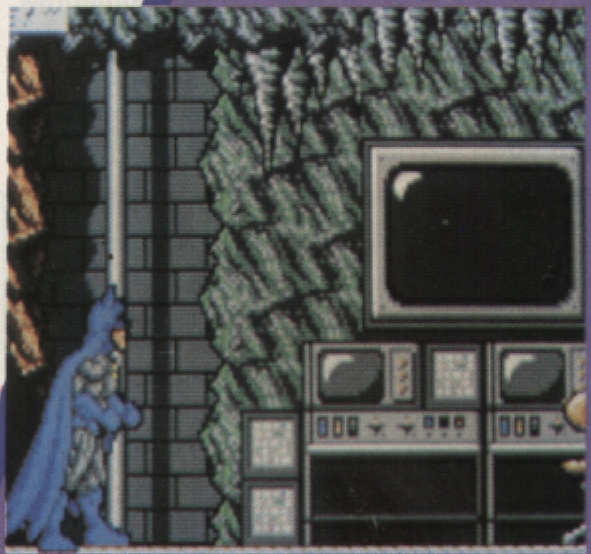
PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	64%
SOUND	77%
VALUE	70%
PLAYABILITY	60%

OVERALL 66%

Batman



Holy screen overlaying arcade adventure! The Dark Knight returns to monitor screens in his first 16-bit incarnation for Ocean. Ciarán Brennan pulls the Batdisk from his utility belt and sits down to enjoy a quick Batgame.

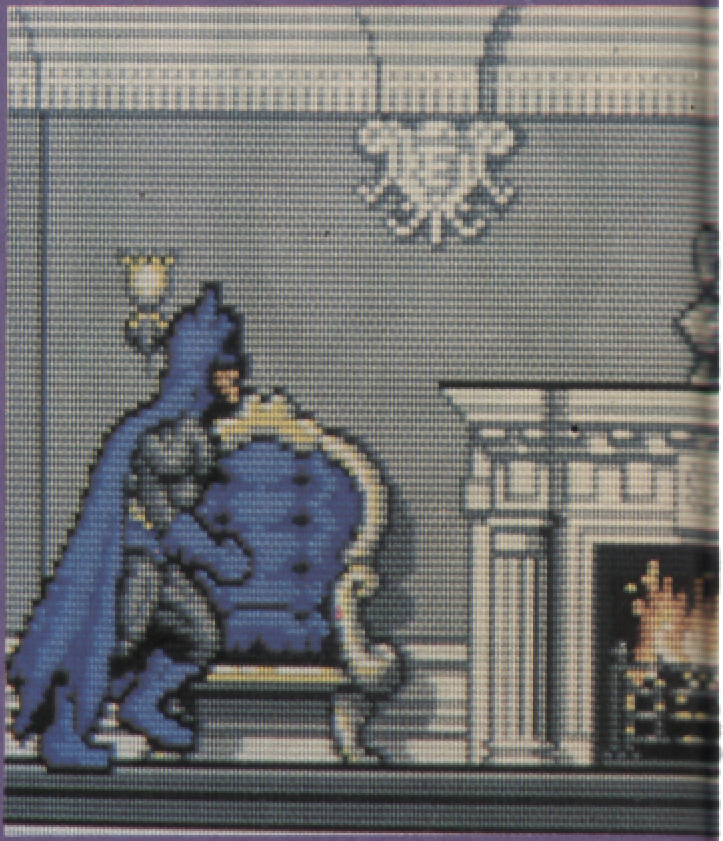


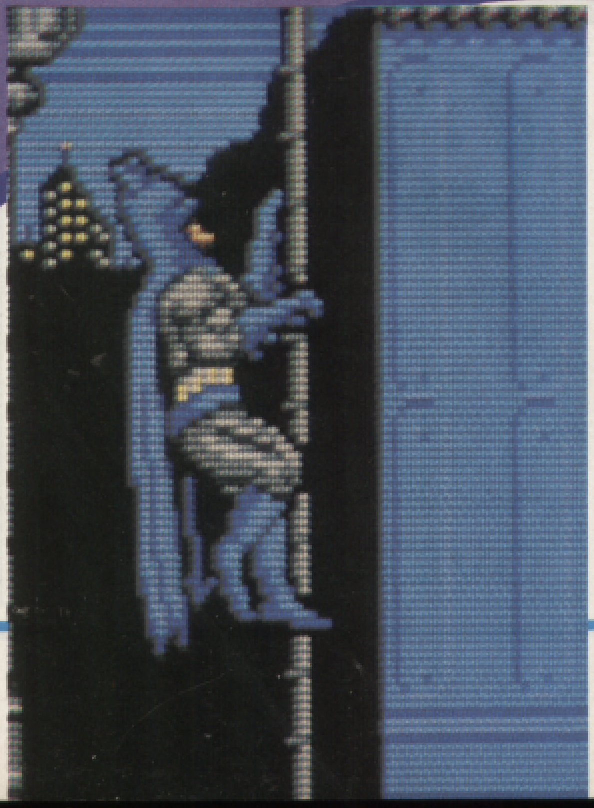
▲ The game commences ... Batman's just arrived in the batcave (by batpole of course!). A quick look at the batcomputer should provide a clue or two, but the machine is getting on a bit and may need a little maintenance.

▼ Going... up! It doesn't take long for The Penguin's minions to cotton on to the fact that there's trouble afoot – so discretion being the better part of valour, Batman uses a handy drainpipe to avoid one armed villain.

A giant Batshadow first appeared over Gotham City in 1939, when Bob Kane's caped crusader burst onto the pages of issue 27 of Detective Comics. Although the character proved to be an immediate success, he had to wait until 1943 to make his screen debut in Columbia's Saturday morning serial, Batman. Lewis Wilson and Douglas Croft portrayed the Dynamic Duo as they faced the evil Dr Daka as played by J Carroll Nash.

The heroic pair's next screen appearance came five years later, in the more extravagantly named follow-up, Batman & Robin (once again for Columbia). This time the task of playing the two main characters fell to Robert Lowery and John Duncan in a series that featured the first appearance of Commissioner Gordon, played by Lyle Talbot.

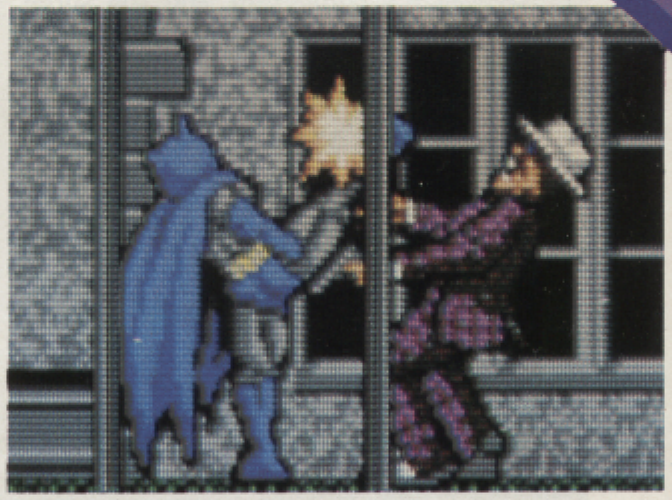




MORE BAT MOVIES



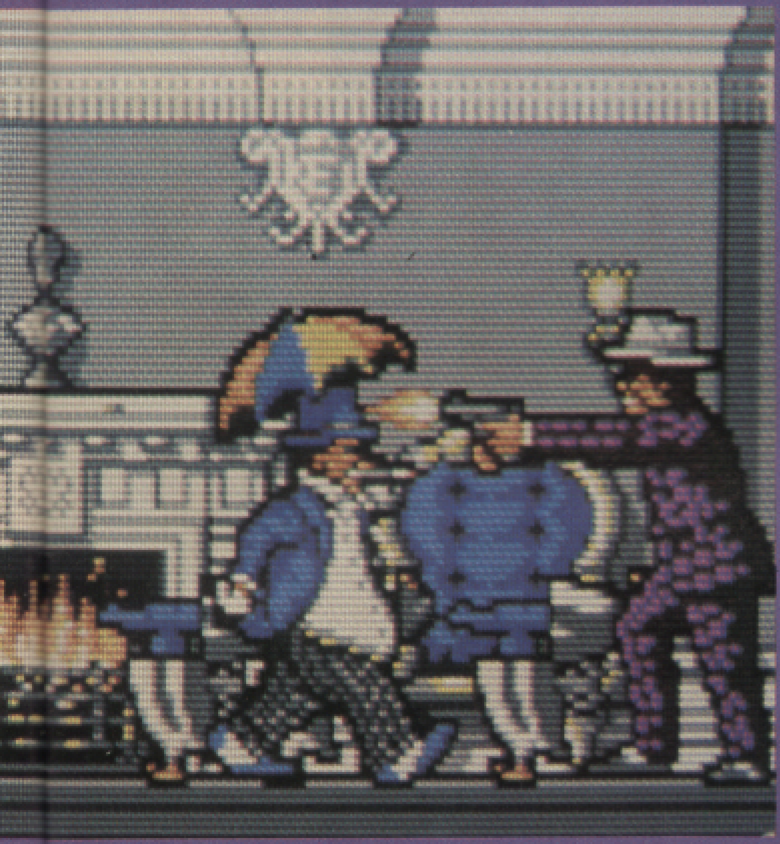
After an absence of 22 years, Batman is set to return to the silver screen with the release of Batman (who on earth thinks up these unimaginative titles?). Michael Keaton plays the caped crusader, with Jack Nicholson taking the part of The Joker. Currently shooting in Pinewood studios, the movie is said to be a further move away from the camp style of the sixties TV series –







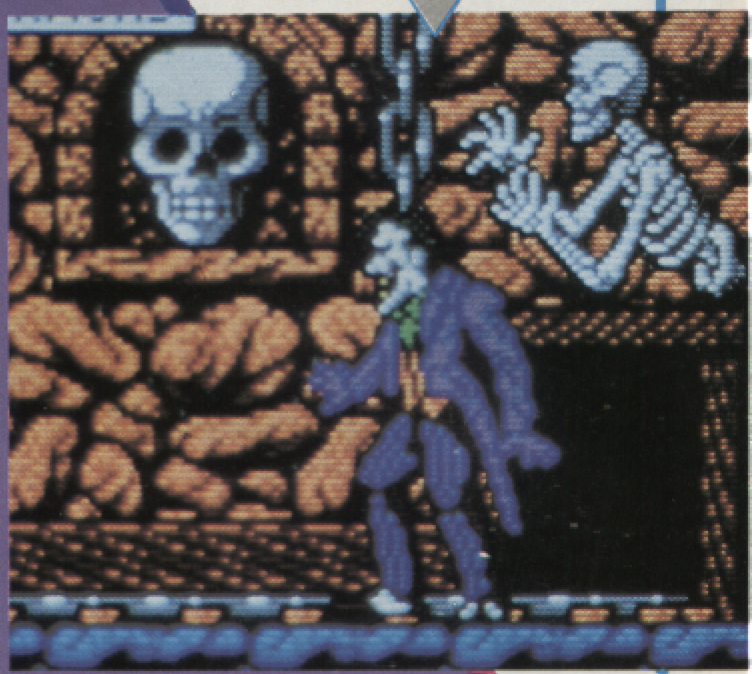
Welcome to The Penguin's humble abode – not only a home for the arch-criminal, but the resting place for a few vital clues too. Old Mr P ain't much of a host though, it looks as though he's leaving one of his servants to 'see you out'.



Then, on January 12 1966, the most famous Batpartnership of all time Ker-powed its way onto America's TV screens as Adam West and Burt Ward took to the streets in a series that was to eventually run for 120 episodes. This could have been so different however, as executive producer William Dozier originally wanted another actor, Ty Hardin, to play the lead role. As fate would have it, Hardin was busy shooting spaghetti westerns in Italy at the time so the part fell to West, whose previous appearances had been in the relatively obscure **Robert Taylor And The Detectives** series.

Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson saved the free world from the menaces of a motley crew of arch-villains including The Penguin (Burgess Meredith), The Joker (Cesar Romero), The Riddler (Frank Gorshin) and Catwoman (Julie Newmar usually – but the villainous feline was also played by Eartha Kitt on one occasion!). Lesser villains who've disappeared into the depths of obscurity include The Mad Hatter, King Tut and The Bookworm (played by Roddy McDowall!).

Batman has changed a lot over the last couple of years – and some would say that the changes are not all for the better. Gone is the camp 'cartoony' style of the TV series, and in its place is the harder vigilante style of the new graphic novels (The Dark Knight, Killing Joke, The Cult etc) where the caped crusader is depicted as a colder tougher character almost verging on insanity.

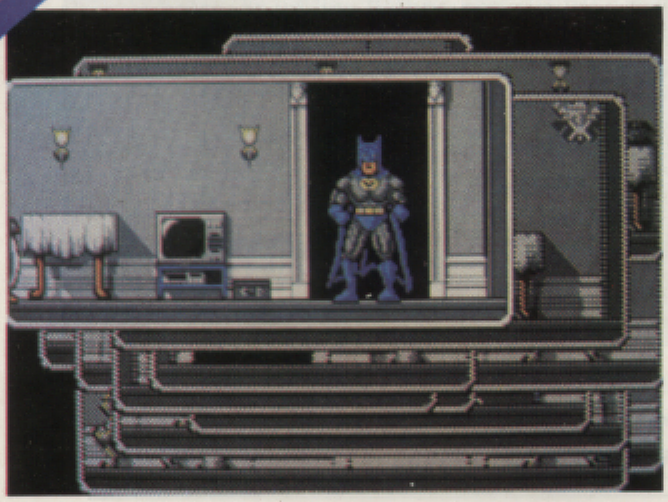


Game number two hots up as you track The Joker to his deadly funfair. Once again the clue's in the caption.



The trusty utility belt allows The Caped Crusader to hold up to 10 useful items at a time. The other functions available from this screen include pick up and drop, batcomputer access, save and load game, and a return to main game facility.

Batman has also undergone a change on the nation's computer monitor screens, as the old **Head Over Heels** style 8-bit 3D adventure has been replaced by a more modern arcade

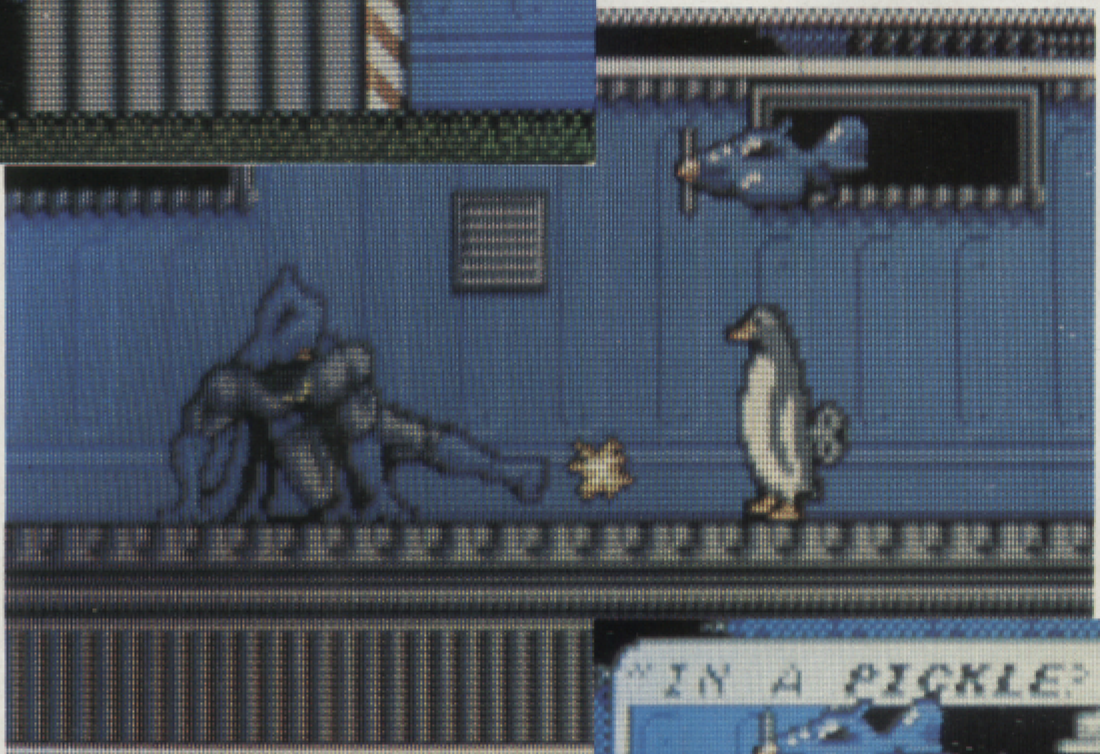


moving more closely into line with Frank Miller's Dark Knight. The film reunites Keaton with Tim Burton, who directed his critically-acclaimed performance in Beetlejuice. Batman's love interest is provided by Kim Basinger, who has replaced Sean Young following her mysterious departure from the set. Batman the movie should hit the screens in the early part of next year. Oh, and by the way, Ocean has already snapped up the licensing rights.





He may look like a 'bizzie', but this is really one of The Penguin's boys in disguise. Batman may be a tough nut, but even he shows a little respect when there's a gun aimed between his eyes. Maybe a little disguise will make things easier. . .



Kick up a penguin! Once past the guard things get even trickier, as The Penguin's range of death-dealing toys advance in droves to polish you off. A quick batkick has seen off the clockwork penguin, but it looks as though it would be wise to stay low to avoid the plane. . .

adventure employing a comic-style screen overlaying technique. And very impresive it is too!

The plot is split into two distinct scenarios, with one of Batman's arch-enemies involved in each. The Penguin plans to overrun Gotham City (and therefore the world) with clockwork penguins in Chapter One, while The Joker has kidnapped Robin in Chapter Two.

The Caped Crusader's job is to foil both of these dastardly plots by filling his utility belt with useful objects that are found along the route and using them to solve some unusual puzzles. For those of you who enjoy a little more action, there's a host of bad guys to be Biffed and Splatted and a range of evil Penguin toys to be destroyed.

There's a large environment to be explored and plenty of obscure items to be picked up and used in the strangest of places. The action is displayed frame by frame in true cartoon style – watch out for 'captioned' screens, as these usually reveal yet another twist to the plot.

Whoops! There seems to be no end to these evil-doers, but maybe there's some help to be found in the caption's cryptic clue – or maybe that door leads to somewhere important. . .



So that's where the door led to. But now that you're finally inside Penguin's warehouse, how do you get to the basement? Is our hero starting to get a little depressed, or once again is there a clue in the caption? Play on and all will be revealed. . .

A

Once again the Amiga conversion is practically identical to the ST, with one notable exception – the soundtrack. This may seem like a fairly cosmetic difference, but just wait until you hear the classic Batman theme tune bursting from your monitor in glorious remixed stereo. It may not be to everyone's taste but it's certainly given an 80's feel to the classic.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	82%
SOUND	83%
VALUE	79%
PLAYABILITY	85%

OVERALL 84%

ST

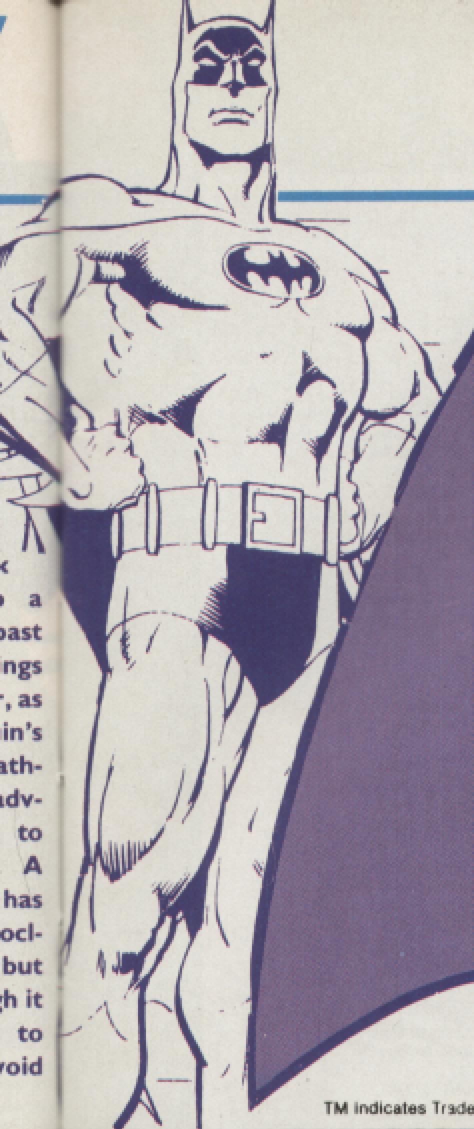
Not so much a game as two games, each housed on a separate disk and each completely playable in its own right. It's impossible to decide whether the characters or the backgrounds are more striking – each are superlative. The gameplay is frustratingly difficult, in fact it's precisely as difficult as this sort of game should be, causing hours of searching and punching and puzzling. The frame overlaying technique is highly effective, as the gradual build up of previously visited screens does wonders for creating a real environment. The lack of a Robin character and the obscurity of some of the puzzle solutions are the only drawbacks that I can find in this otherwise superb licence.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	82%
SOUND	83%
VALUE	79%
PLAYABILITY	85%

OVERALL 84%

PC

If all goes well, owners of CGA and EGA equipped IBM compatibles should be able to sample their own Batdelights before Christmas. The graphics are being directly ported sideways from the ST (for the EGA version) and should survive the transition with only minor changes. Watch out for an update in a future issue.



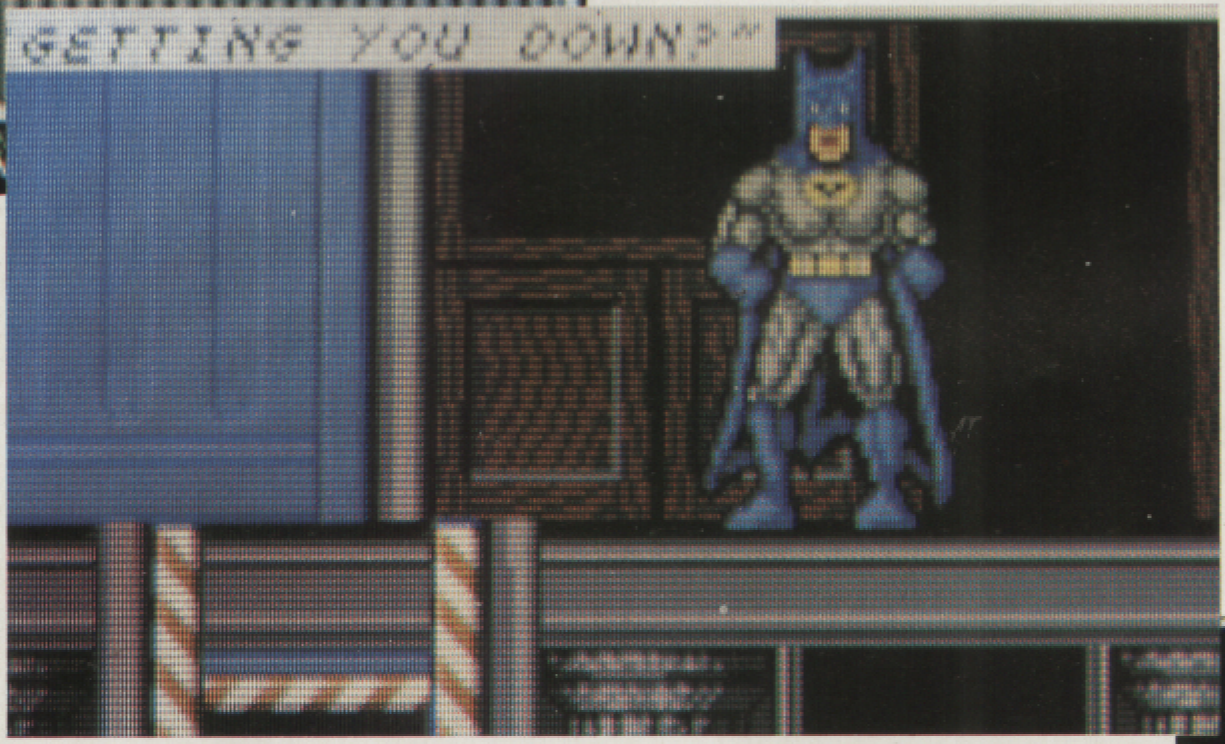
The Batprogrammers

Special FX is a group of programmers, graphic artists and musicians formed 18 months ago by Paul Finnegan and John Smith. Originally the team consisted of just five members but this number has now grown to 14. The Merseyside-based company's first ventures were in the 8-bit sector: **Firefly** and **Gutz** for Ocean and **Hysteria** for Software Projects. **Batman** is its first 16-bit project, and was produced on a specially written development system, which will also be used on future projects. The graphics were designed on **Deluxe Paint II** and then converted for the ST.

The boys at SFX like a good blast and their fave raves include **Galaga 88** and **Operation Wolf**. They're all Batman fans (a fact that helped them to get the Batman contract from Ocean!) and surprisingly enough, they loved the news that Robin was finally killed off (DC Comics number 428). "He was a hanger-on," says Paul. Now that work on Batman has finished, SFX will soon be embarking on its next Ocean project which is likely to be either a coin-op conversion or Ocean's next Batlicence – **Batman The Movie.**







Holy Batexpressions! ... or some of Robin's funnier exclamations.

Holy Bouncing Boilerplate!
Holy Astringent Pomerite Fruit!
Holy Journey To The Centre Of The Earth!
Holy Werner Von Braun!
Holy One Track Batcomputer Mind!
Holy Known-Unknown Flying Objects!
Holy Sudden Incapacitation!
Holy Tintinnabulation!
Holy Uncanny Photographic Mental Processes!
Holy Travel Agent!
Holy Surprise Party!
Holy Priceless Collection Of Etruscan Snoods!
Holy Hardest Metal In The World!

Well, you made it down, but who turned the lights off? And holy cover of darkness, someone's shooting from the shadows – how will The Caped Crusader escape this time? Tune in next week... same time, same batchannel to find out.



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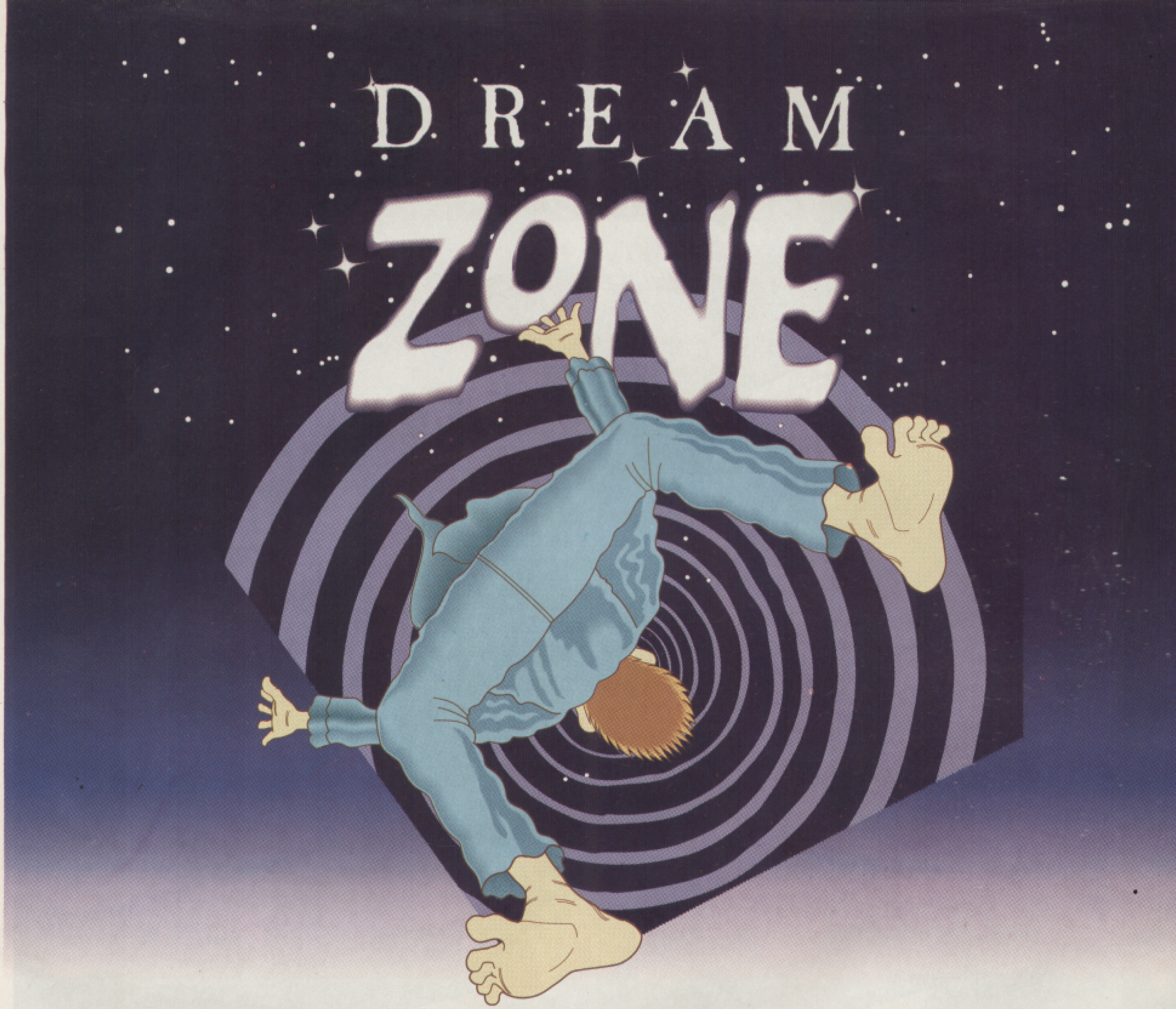
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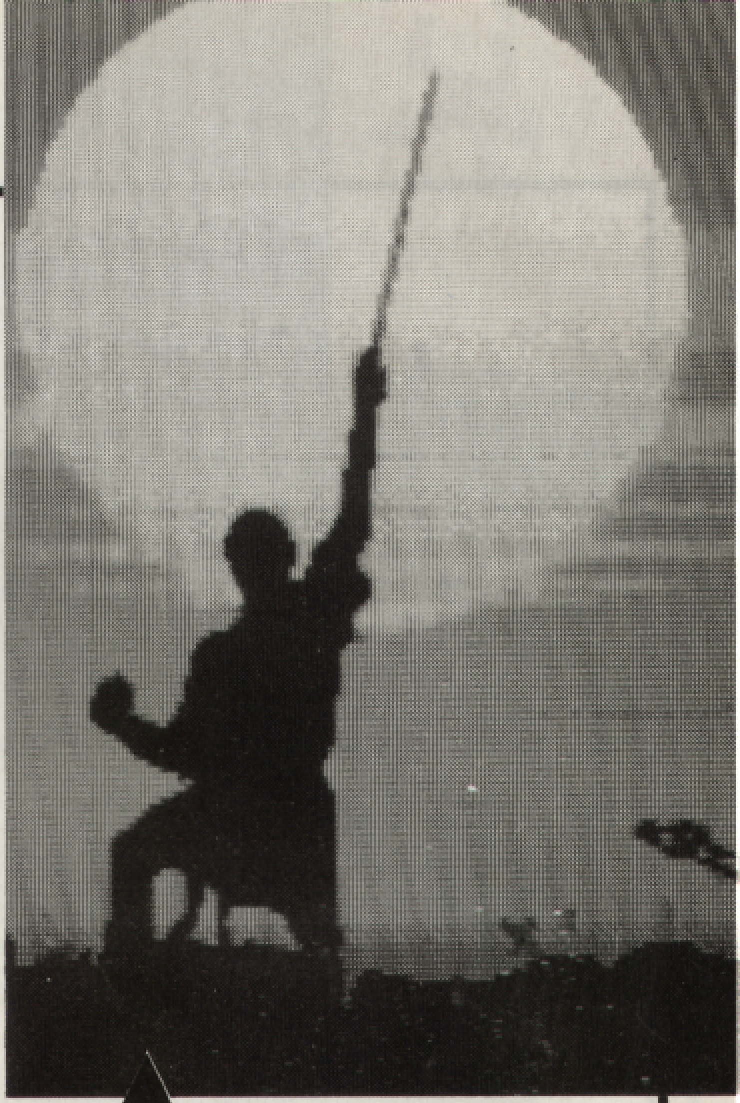
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DREAM
ZONE



Joan Of Arc

Joan of Arc combines strategy, simulation, arcade and adventure sequences in a recreation of 15th century France. It's ambitious, but does it hang together? Graham Taylor enters the fray.

The major problem with 'straight' strategy games is that their appeal is limited. Consequently, to shift serious numbers of units of 'strategy' type software, soft ware houses come up with all kinds of ploys to make such games attractive to a wider audience. This usually means adding graphics and arcade sequences. The problem is that more often as not you end up with a game that falls between the two stools of arcade and strategy. An example of how to do it (more or less) properly was Cinemaware's Defender Of The Crown. Joan Of Arc attempts to achieve the same sort of thing.



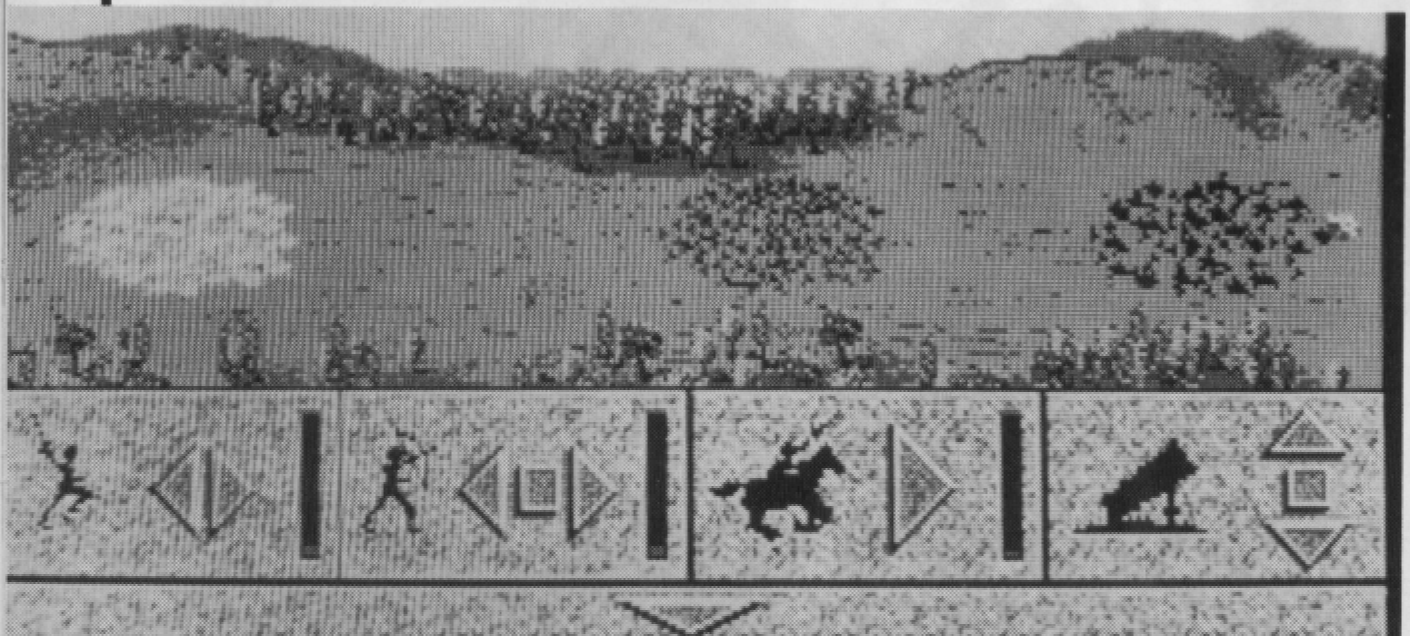
The storming of the castle of ramparts is just one of the many sub-games that appear throughout.

The objective is to save 15th century France from the English invaders. You play Charles, Dauphin of France, commanding a valiant French army headed by Joan Of Arc. Saint Joan, as she was later to become, was chosen by God himself to return you to the throne.

In practice, this means moving your army around the map and using either



The thunder of hooves and the clash of metal ring out as a deadly joust begins. Choose your weapon carefully and make sure to get the first cut in.

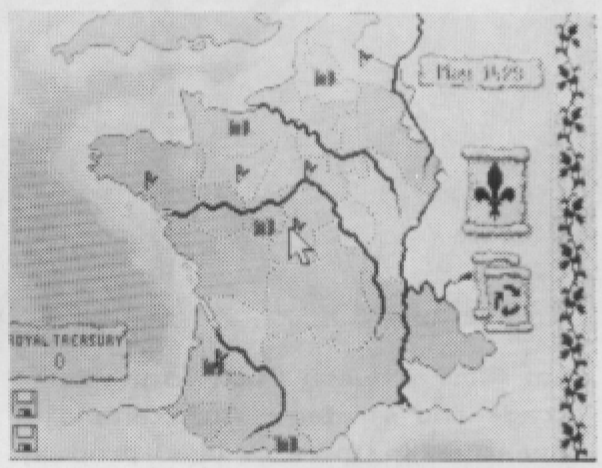


This, believe it or not, is the thrilling main battle scene. Watch your step!

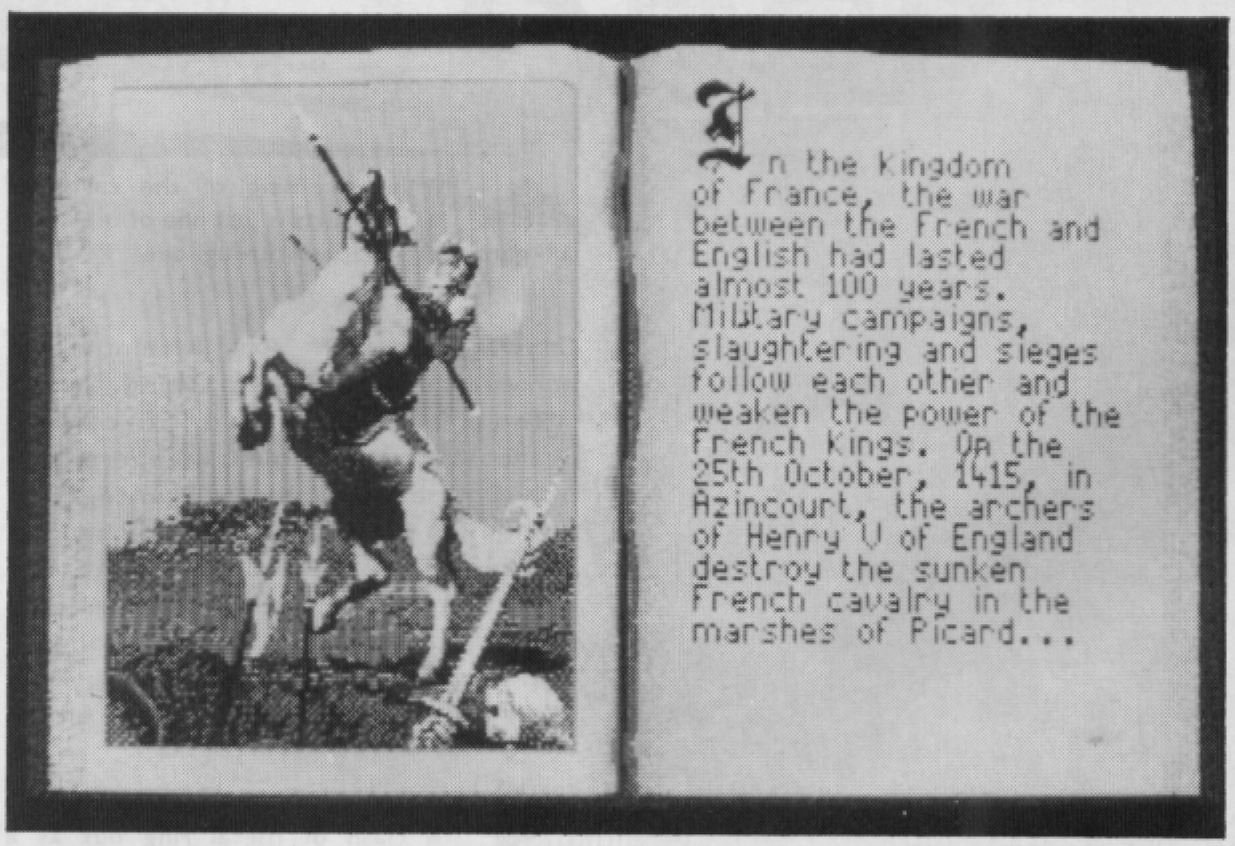
battle or various kinds of political subterfuge, including diplomacy, espionage, taxes and alliances to win over friends and rout enemies.

Play begins on a large map of France showing the areas under your control. The first objective is to crown yourself – without this power many of the options are unavailable, depending, as they do, on Regal power.

Selection of army and movement orders are achieved by mouse clicking on the map. Then follow the first arcade sequence. Influence on events is limited – through the mouse you can fire cannons, start a cavalry charge and bring troops forward. Chances are you'll win.



The map may not be visually exciting, but it does represent the key to gaining control of all France.



The scene is set in a novel fashion . . .

ST

The problem with Joan Of Arc is the fact that the separate elements just don't hang together. The arcade sequences are either totally gratuitous (I never did manage to lose the big fight sequence no matter what what I banal. Like all 8-bit budget games winning and losing seems unrelated to actual skill. The graphics are varied, the big fights are almost laughable with their massed little dots jumping up and down, while other sections, like the castle ramparts defence, looked like digitised pictures. Some of the control mechanisms seem absurdly over-complicated too, double clicks where single clicks could do, complex combined mouse movements for simple moves... and so on. Worst of all, is the almost continuous disk accessing, virtually every decision you take is followed by a good 30 seconds of whirring – this seriously detracts from the excitment level. To its credit the game has a lot to it and for some the pure strategic elements may be enough, withthe arcade sections just a distraction. For the uncommitted though, Joan Of Arc is not going to win any new converts.

PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	48%
SOUND	60%
VALUE	51%
PLAYABILITY	64%

OVERALL 62%

A

Amiga owners are in for a greater disappointment, as Joan's Commodore incarnation is visually identical to its Atari counterpart. The major difference is the addition of sampled noises to the soundtrack – keep an ear open for authentic screams and sword clashes which grace the battle sequences.

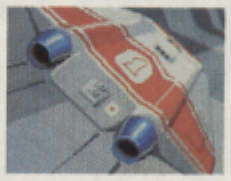
PC

Joan Of Arc was originally written in C, which is probably the most portable of programming formats. Therefore, the PC version is identical in all respects to the original ST program. Both CGA and EGA graphic cards are supported.


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Pow

Is it a flight simulator? Is it a futuristic sport? Or is it a race game loosely based on the M25? Actually it's a bit of each, as Steve Jarratt found when he entered Electronic Arts' arena.



Based around the fictitious Powerdrome XXIV Championship, EA's latest release is a high-tech racing simulator set in the future. The player is charged with the task of racing over six courses, set on



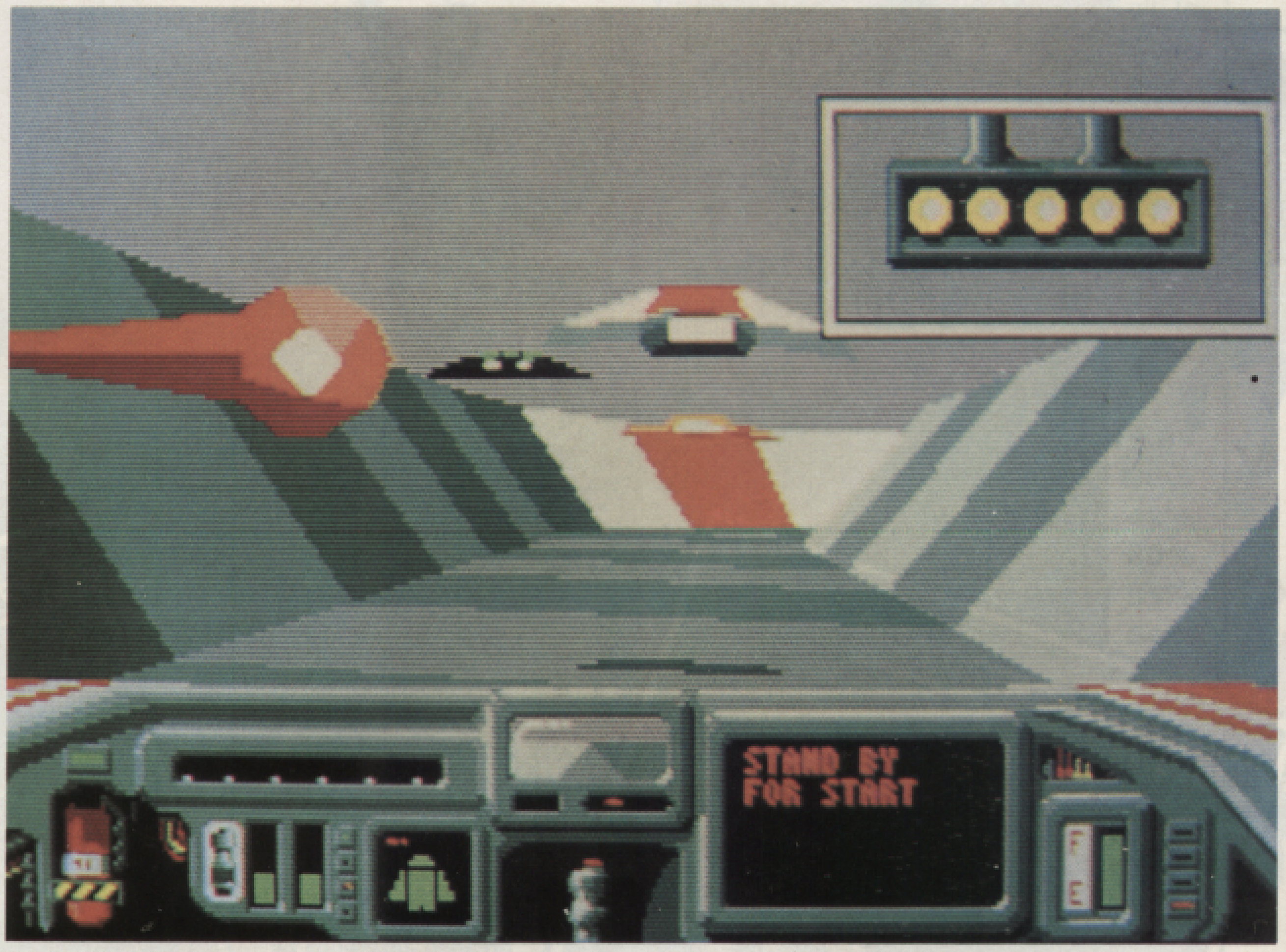
Here, the many options are accessed, allowing you to examine the opposition, enter the Powerdrome championship, view, practice or compete in individual courses, and tune-up the Typhoon hover ship.

different planets, in order to make off with the coveted Cyberneufe trophy.

Races take place within increasingly tortuous 3D 'channels' which include dips, loops, chicanes and darkened tunnel sections as the later stages of the championship are reached. The player competes against four other pilots, each guiding a high-powered 'Typhoon' class hover-ship. These versatile craft can fly like a plane or hover at any velocity, allowing the more treacherous parts of the course to be taken at low speeds.

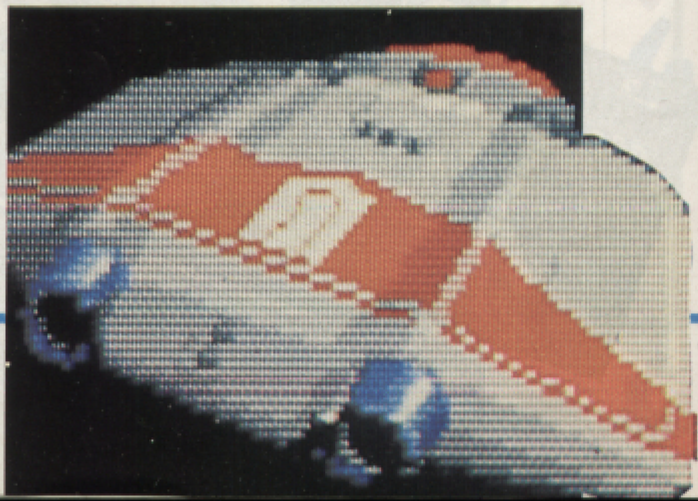
Following a short 'tuning' session, circuits are completed in an attempt to achieve the best possible lap time, with starting positions allocated in shortest lap time order. In practice though, this tends to be a pretty pointless task: unlike motor racing, where obtaining pole position can put you ahead of 20 or 30 cars, there are only five participants in **Powerdrome**, and the huge courses allow any of the competitors to zoom straight into the lead using the afterburner facility.

Powerdrome allows pit stops for refuelling and damage repair and also has the option for a two-player head-to-head, whereby two separate machines are linked via a datalink, allowing either player to 'see' his human opposition on the track.

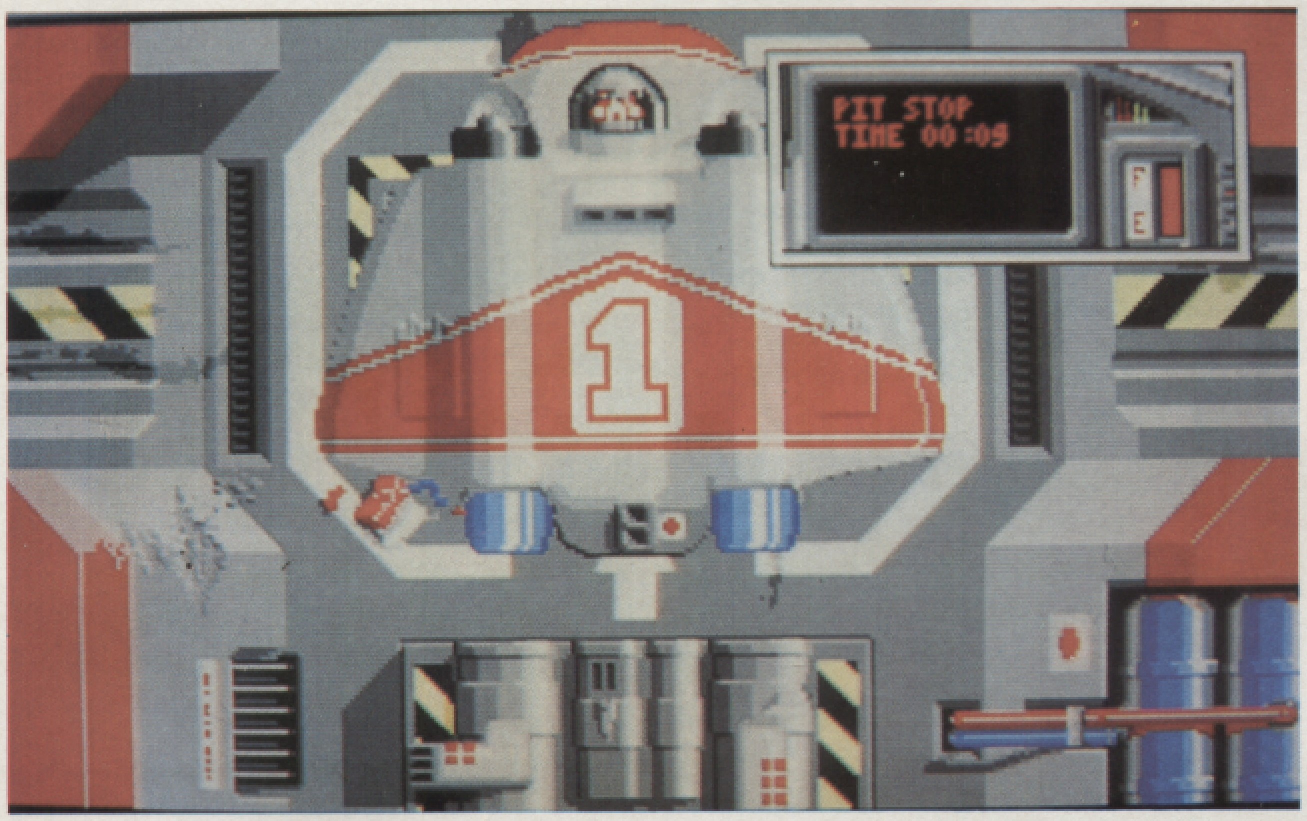


Stand by for start . . . This is the most frequent view of the opposition – unless you can get to grips with the tetchy controls . . . if not it's back to the drawing board.

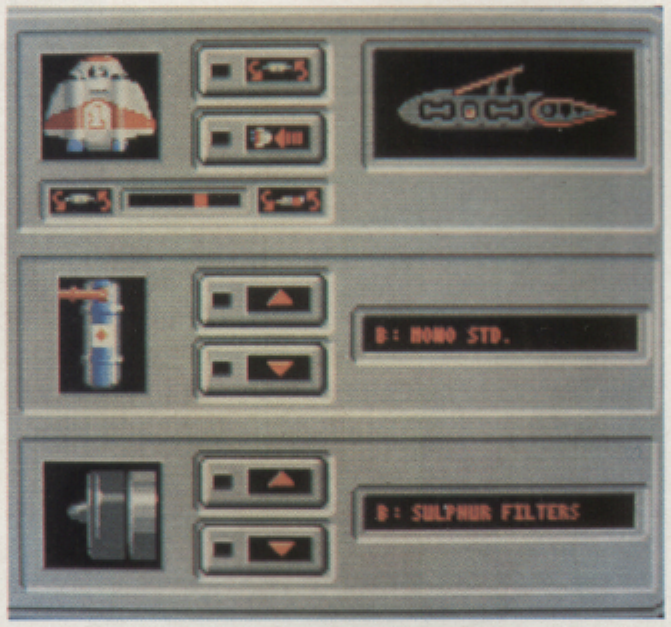




erdrome



Entering the pits allows the Typhoon to be refuelled and repaired. Large robot arms appear to remove the offending wing, nose cone or engine, and fit a new one.



The player's Typhoon can be altered to best suit the current atmosphere and style of the course. The aerodynamics are trimmed by adjusting the size and position of aerofoils; the engine filters can be changed to correspond with the air conditions; and the type of fuel can be varied, depending upon the desire for speed or economy. This screen also allows number of laps for individual races to be set between 5 and 50.



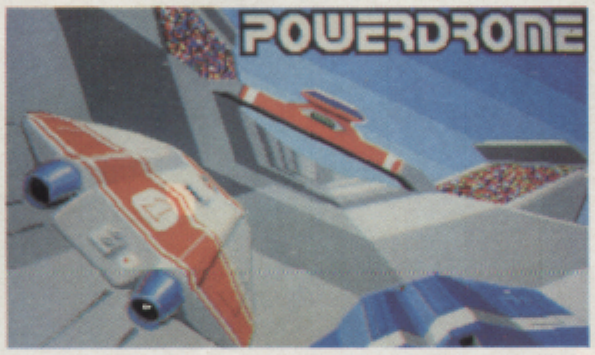
Powerdrome is the debut from 25 year old Michael Powell, a former British Steel engineer turned full-time games programmer. The inspiration for this off-beat racing game came about while Michael was burning down the A1 on his motorbike – he went through a tunnel and thought: "what an effect".

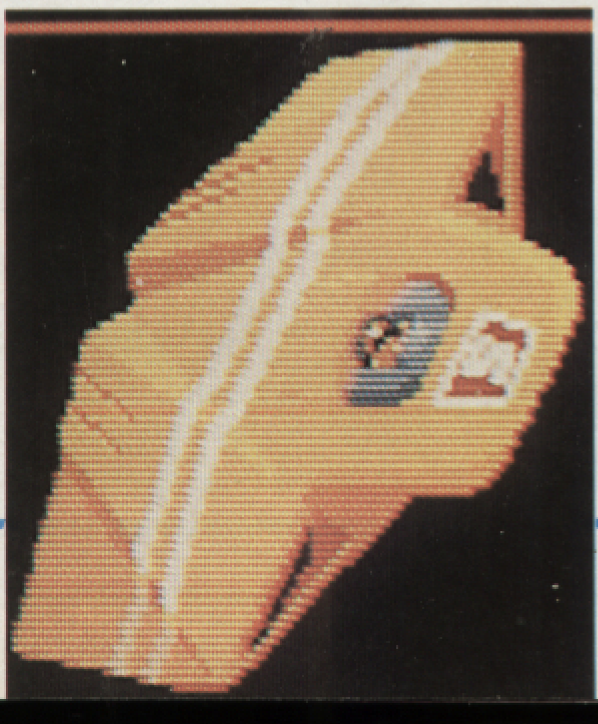
"I wanted to do a flight simulation originally, but everyone was doing them so I had to think again. The idea for a racing game hit me while I was burning down the A1." Powerdrome has taken Michael around a year to write. "The 3D took the most time, but I also did all the other artwork and that's time consuming."

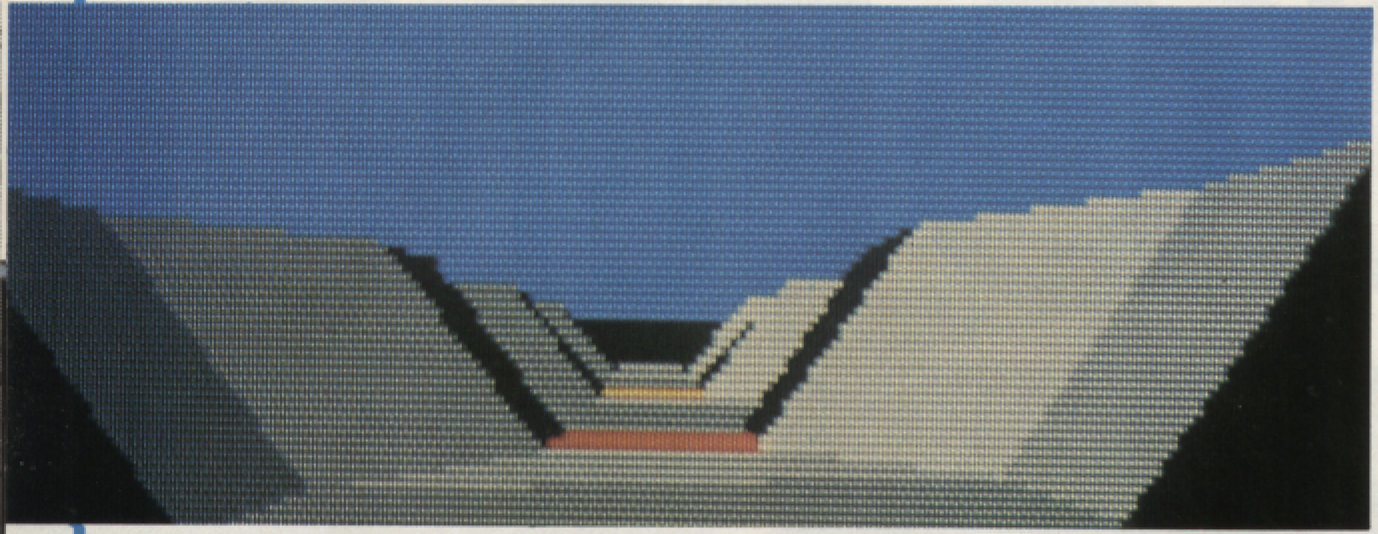
When he's not nipping about on his motorbike or tinkering with games ideas, Michael likes to play games which are a little bit different. "I'm not really into scrolling shoot 'em ups, I prefer stuff like Sublogic's Flight Simulator and Flight Simulator II. I was impressed with Virus and I like Jez San's stuff, but I was disappointed with some of the gameplay in Carrier Command." As for his next project. . . well, Michael remains tight-lipped: "I've no firm plans, but I certainly want to develop the 3D side of things."

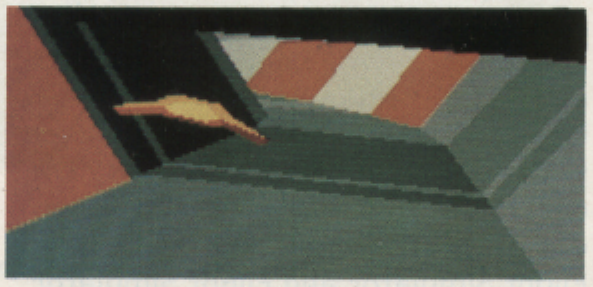


The flashing green portal signifies the entrance to the pit lane, which is entered by simply flying into it.

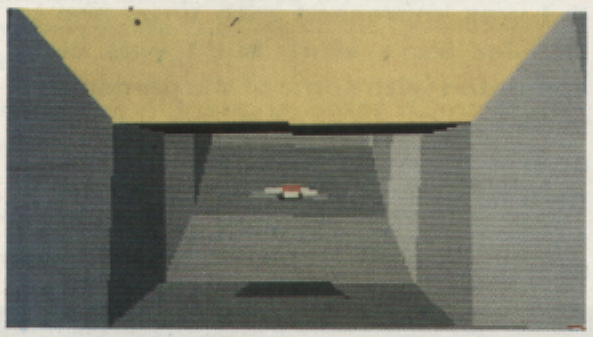


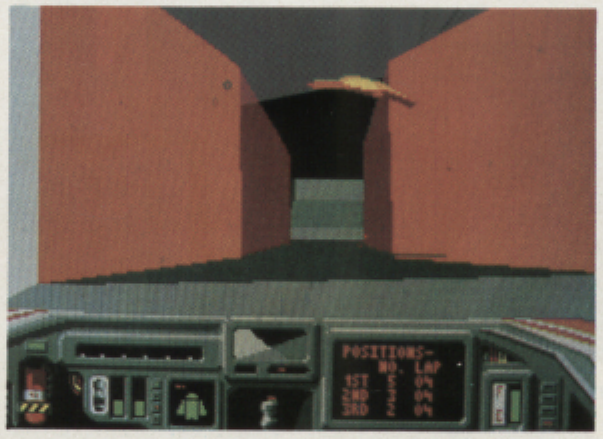




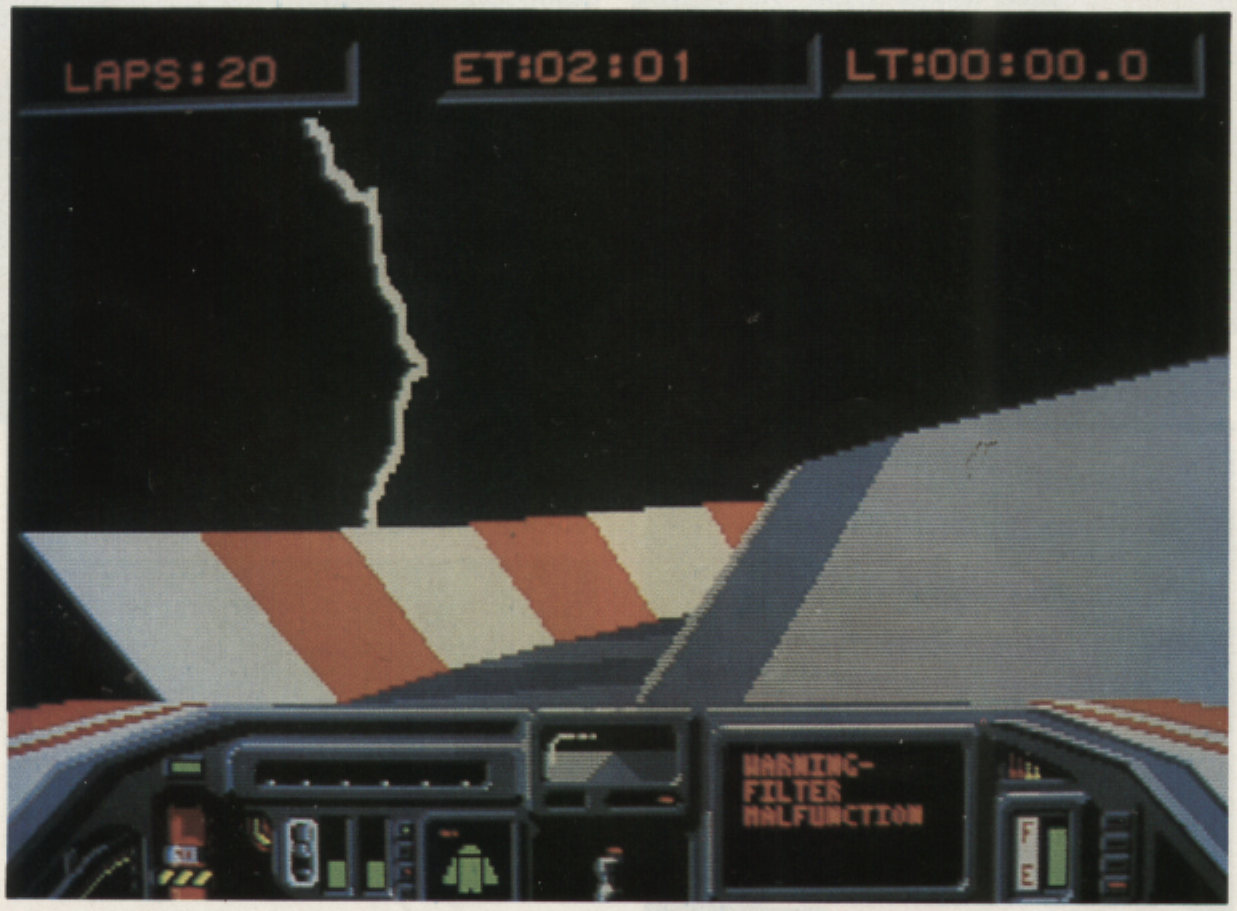


The coloured squares correspond to the different vehicles' pit areas – yours is red. To enter the pit itself, the Typhoon must be slowed down just above the square, at which point the pit tractor-beam grabs the vessel and auto-docks with the repair and refuelling equipment.





Sound is rather harsh, but does have one or two nice touches, such as an engine start, and some thunder during the frequent storms.

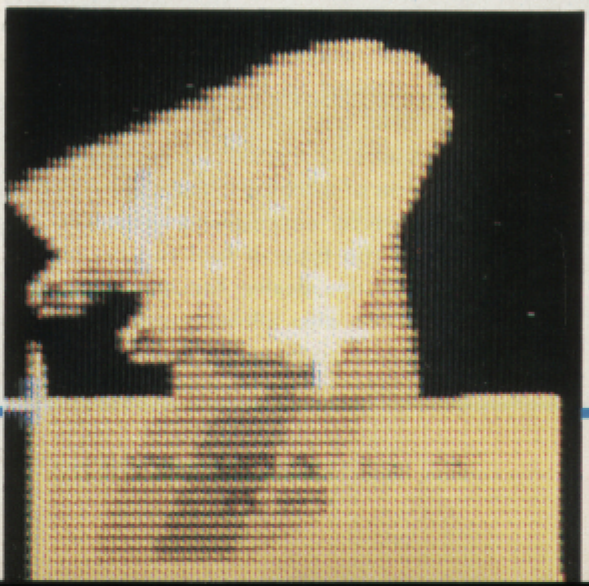


ST The impressive speed and realism of the filled-in vector graphic courses create a sufficiently believeable sensation of movement. Tie this in with the excitement inherent in any racing game, and what we *should* have here is a pretty exhilarating experince. Unfortunately, control of the vessel is ridiculously sensitive, making the craft practically unmanageable. The Typhoon's aerodynamics can be trimmed, but this only goes part-way to solving the problem. I've no doubt that some will be able to get to grips with the game, but most – like myself – will be frustrated and disappointed at the apparent inability to guide the craft anywhere other than straight into a wall. The amount of practice needed to beat the extremely proficient computer opponents (on even the simplest course, let alone the later ones!) seems barely worth the effort. This lack of immediate (and possibly even long-term) playbility is a real shame: the package as a whole is excellently presented, with some very friendly option screens and great still graphics.

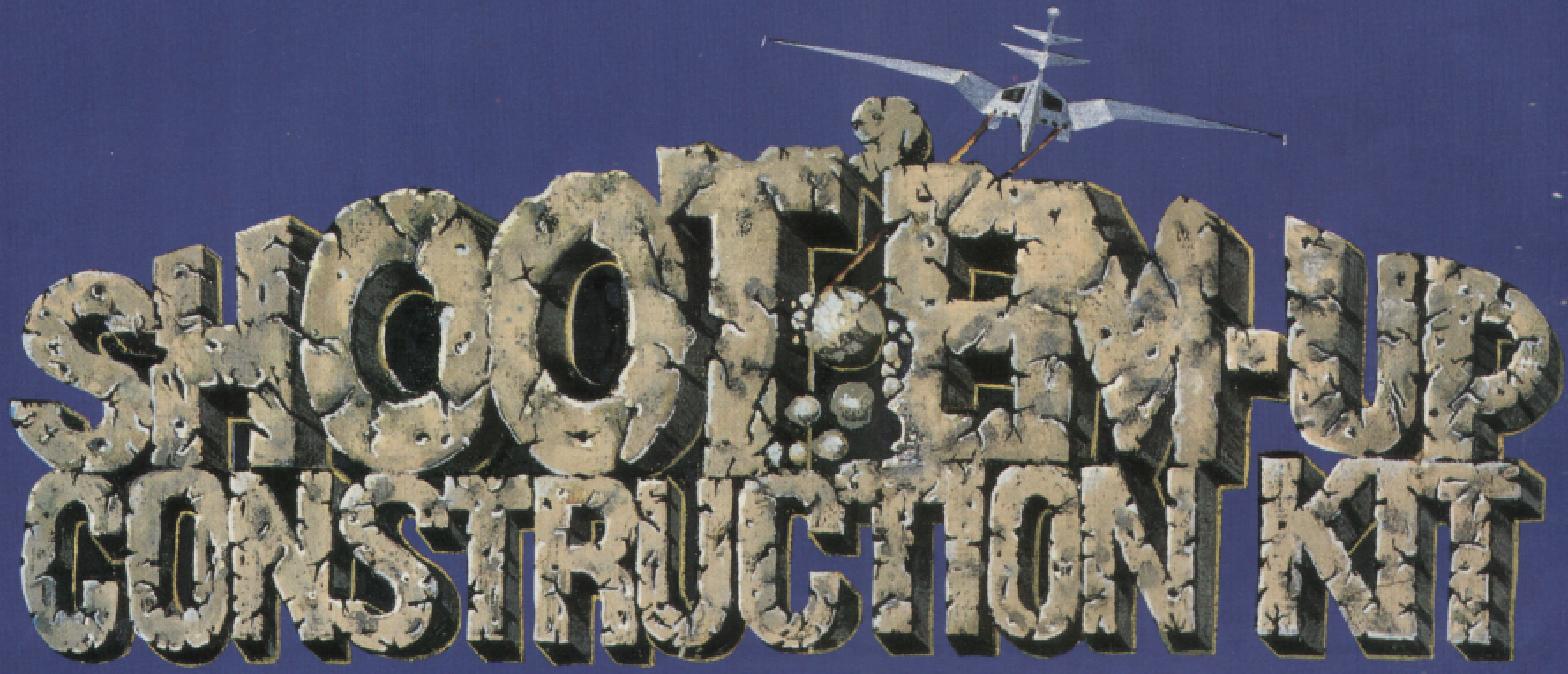
PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	63%
PLAYABILITY	66%
VALUE	61%

OVERALL 70%

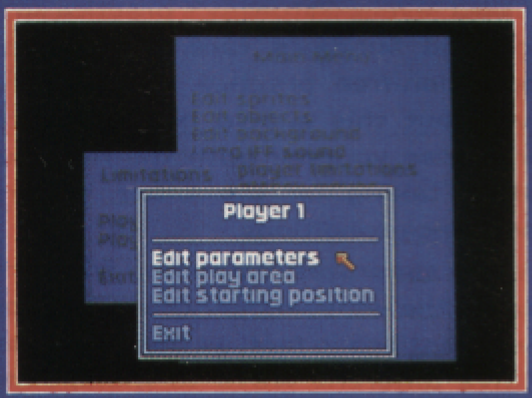
A The Amiga version is currently in progress, but it won't hit the streets until at least March of next year. As for any enhancements – Mr Powell reckons that he has an extra 400K of memory to play with so there should be rather more than improved graphics to look forward to. Digitised speech will definitely be added to the soundtrack and there's a strong possibility that an extra circuit will be added to the options.



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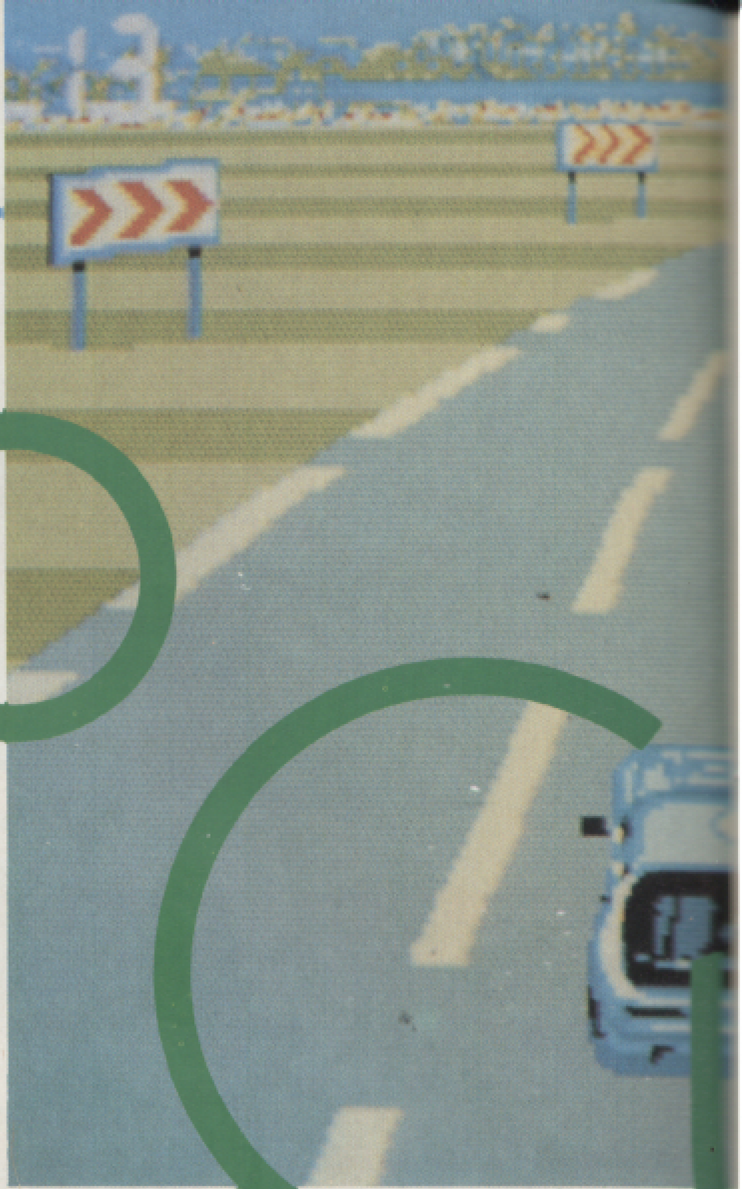
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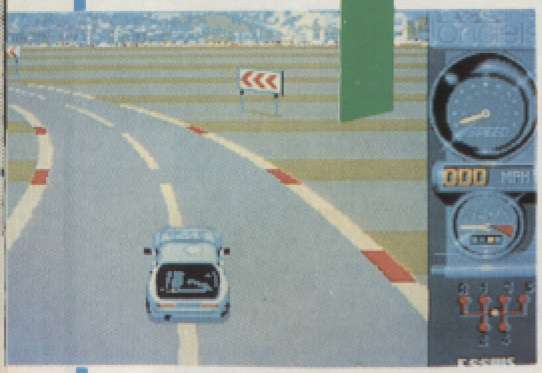
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PALACE SOFTWARE

Please check for availability of individual formats

Turbo Cup





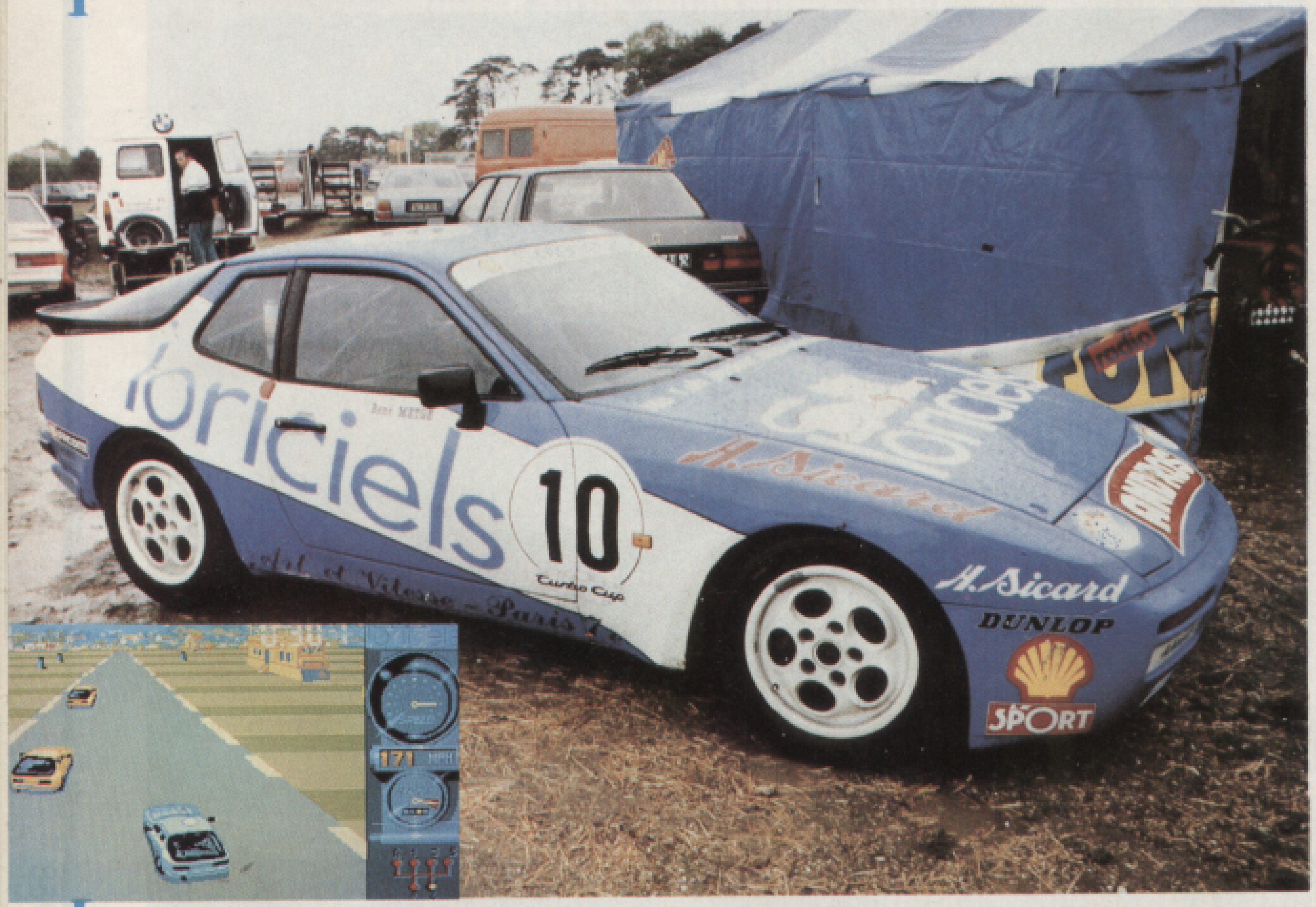
Confirmed Skoda driver Ciaran Brennan thought he'd died and gone to heaven when he found himself behind the wheel of a 944 Porsche Turbo. Loriciels sponsored the action.

Racing enthusiasts will already know a darn sight more than I do about the Andros Turbo Cup, but for the rest of you here's a quick summary. The Cup is an annual motor race (well it has been since 1985), where 30 of France's top drivers compete in similar cars – Porsche 944 Turbos. Loriciels' connection with this glamorous event comes through the company's sponsoring of last year's winner, Rene Metge.

Mr Metge is certainly a talented driver, having won his first race in 1967 and since then taken the honours in countless competitons including the gruelling Paris-Daker rally – three times! Rene has contributed his considerable experience to the development of this racing simulation, so at least it should be technically accurate.

Taking the usual 'behind and above' viewpoint, the action is split into two distinct levels: Saturday's practice session and Sunday's race. One lap of opposition-free practice is all you're given, but this should be enough to familiarise yourself with the machine before taking on the other drivers under race conditions.

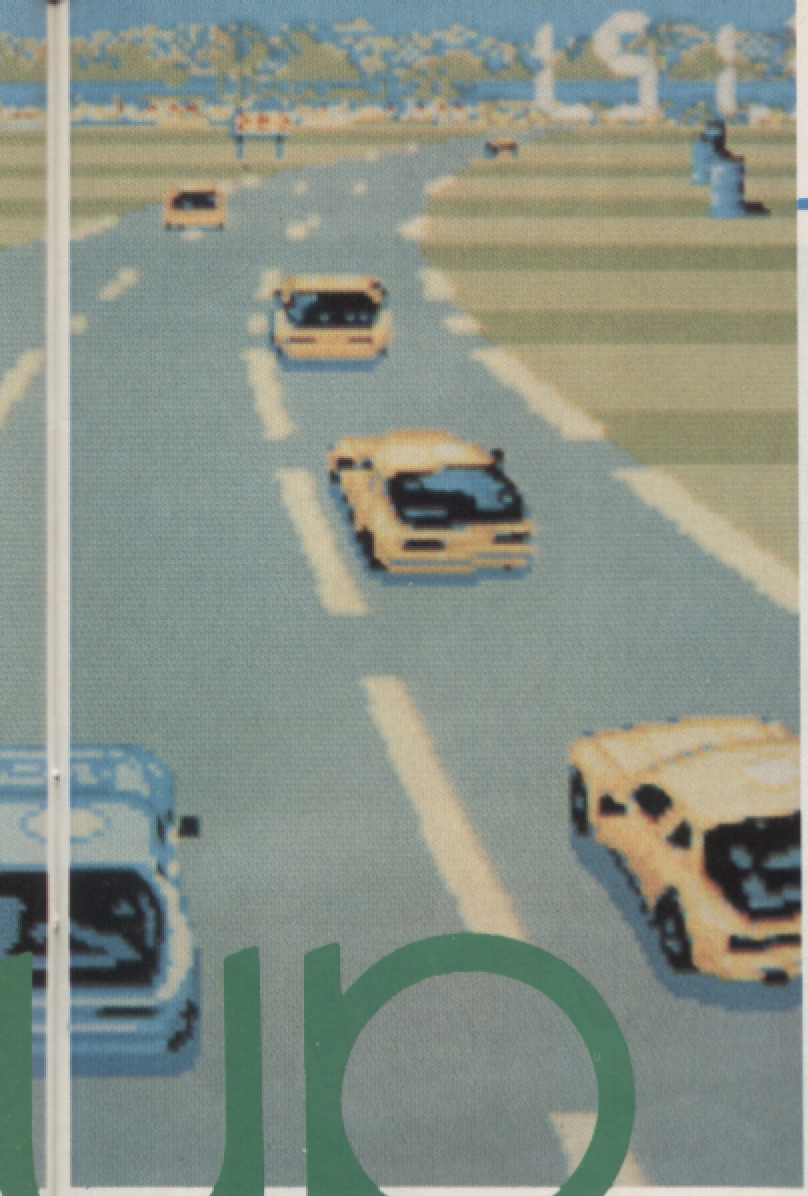
What separates **Turbo Cup** from the pack is the unusual gear change option – well, options in fact, as there's a total of five different ways to manipulate the gears using the keyboard, a single joystick or a pair of joysticks in unison (one to steer the car and the other serving solely as the gearstick). There's even an automatic mode for those of you who are too lazy to think for yourselves.

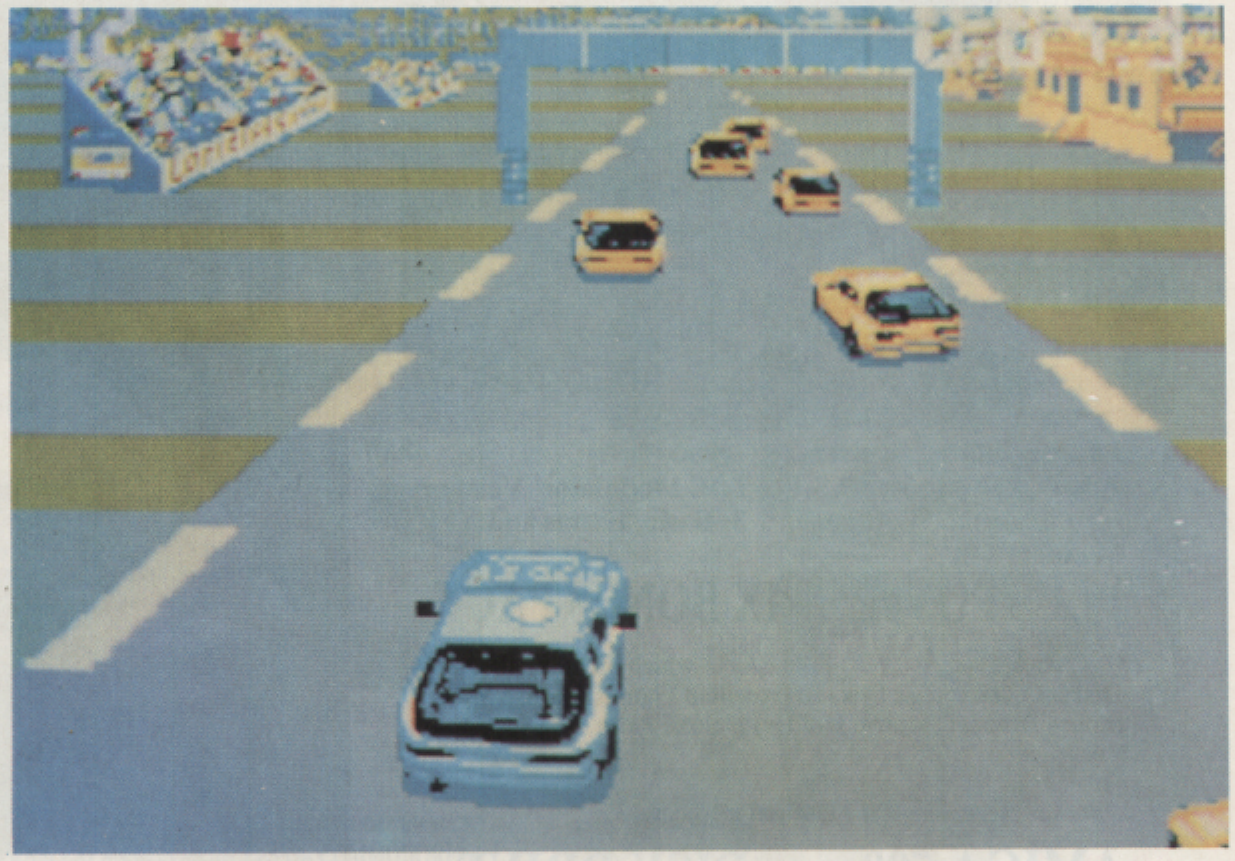


▲ The beast! For the uneducated among you this is the Porsche (pronounced Pore-sheh) 944 Turbo, as sponsored by Loriciels and driven by Rene Metge. In its normal state the 2.5 litre, four cylinder engine is capable of reaching a maximum speed of 150 mph and accelerating from a standstill to 60 mph in a staggering 6.3 seconds! The specially modified Turbo Cup model has a larger turbo unit which increases the bhp by 20 to 250 (that translates to very powerful).

▼ Four tracks to choose from, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Whether you prefer the sharp braking and quick acceleration of hairpin bends or the smoother but faster action of long gentle curves, it's all here.







One of the major drawbacks is the opposition, who seem hell bent on running your motor off the track. The number in the top left shows your relative position, while the figure in the top right is the elapsed time which is the racing equivalent of a high score (by the way Rene Metge is at the top of the table, so it's going to take some going to knock him off).





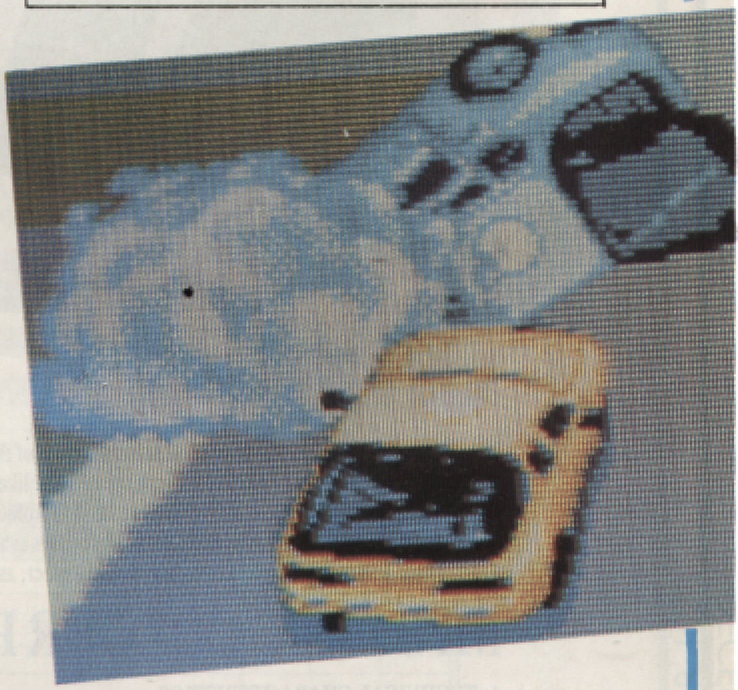
PC A CGA version is expected to appear before Christmas, differing only graphically from its ST counterpart. PC owners who expect their visuals to be a little stronger and who are equipped with an EGA card will have to wait until early 1989 for a suitable version.

ST The engine may sound like a Flymo and the control is a little on the sloppy side, but Turbo Cup is a really playable racing game. Graphically, it's quite similar to Loriciels' previous effort, Space Racer, but it certainly leaves that behind in the playability stakes. the multiple gear change option means that even a beginner can immediately compete. Neat little touches such as the working brake lights and flashing turbo round off a neat package.

PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	75%
SOUND	66%
VALUE	82%
PLAYABILITY	71%

OVERALL 78%

A The Amiga's faster processor lends itself perfectly to producing a smoother and faster racing simulation – and Turbo Cup should prove no exception to this rule. Firstly, the lawnmower simulation will be lost from the soundtrack, and hopefully replaced with something a little more realistic. Apart from the smoother movement, there should be no graphic difference.



Whoops! This is what happens if two drivers get a little too close – but don't worry, no prang is too much for the hardy 944 and you soon end up back in the race.

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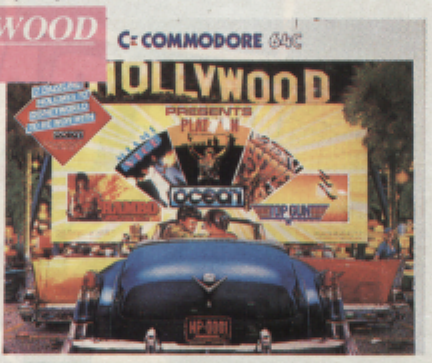
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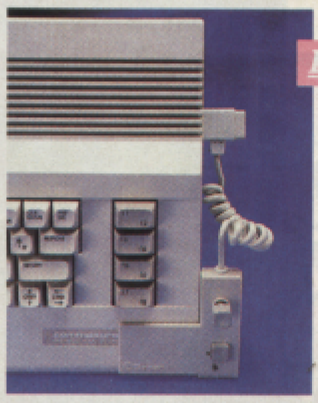
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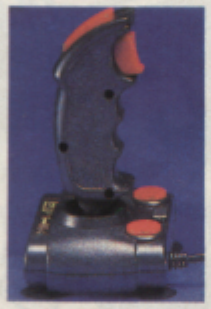
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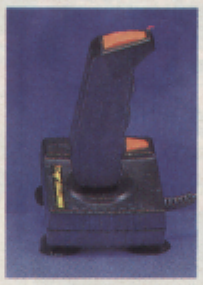
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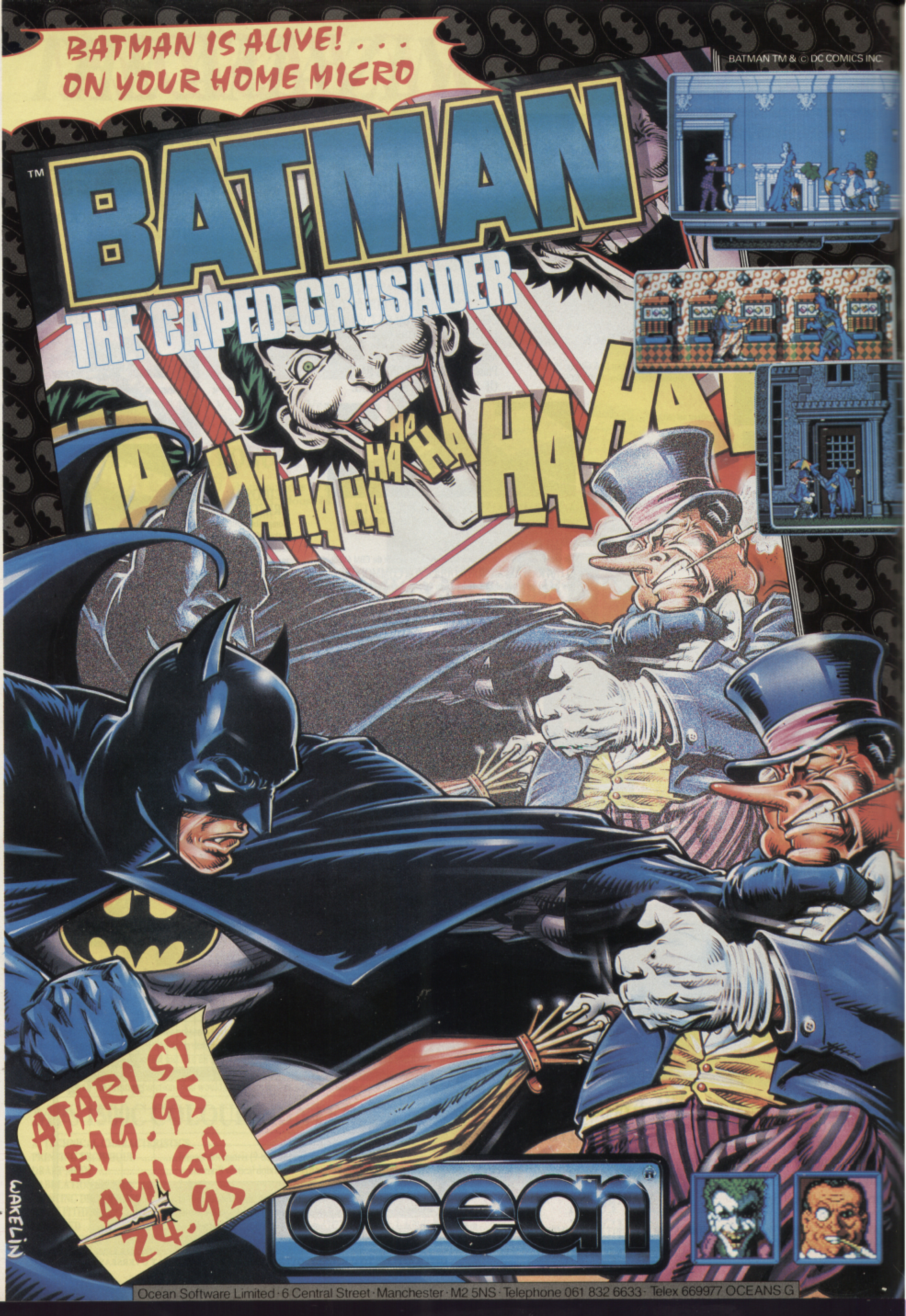
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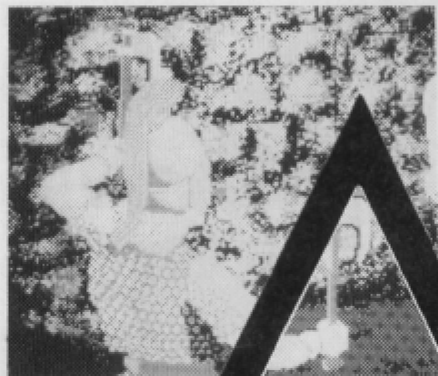
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Artura is an arcade adventure from Gremlin Graphics. It's set in Britain's ancient past of Kings, Magicians and great battles. Graham Taylor peers through the mists of time and answers the eternal question: inventive mythical fable or creaky old platform and ladders game?

Artura

Actually, when you come to think about it, computer game companies haven't actually done Ancient Britain much in game plots. Greek Myths, fables and Ninjas, yes. But old Arthur and his mates... hardly a whisper. Still, Gremlin has put all that right with **Artura** which freely adapts what I take to be Mallory's Celtic history.

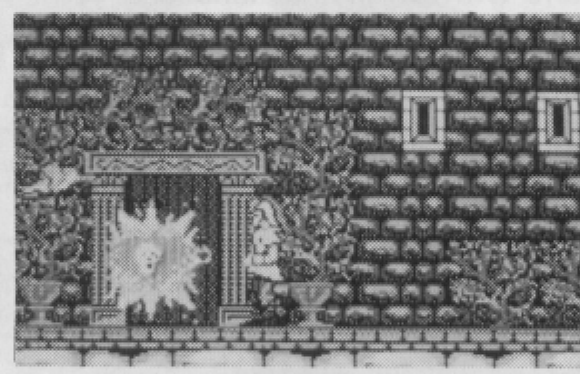
To cut a long plot short – you are Artura and you need to find and release Merdyn the Mage from evil Morgause's castle so that he can help you unite the warring hoardes of Albion. All that's needed to accomplish this mammoth task is to find the fragments of nine rune stones which are scattered about the stronghold.

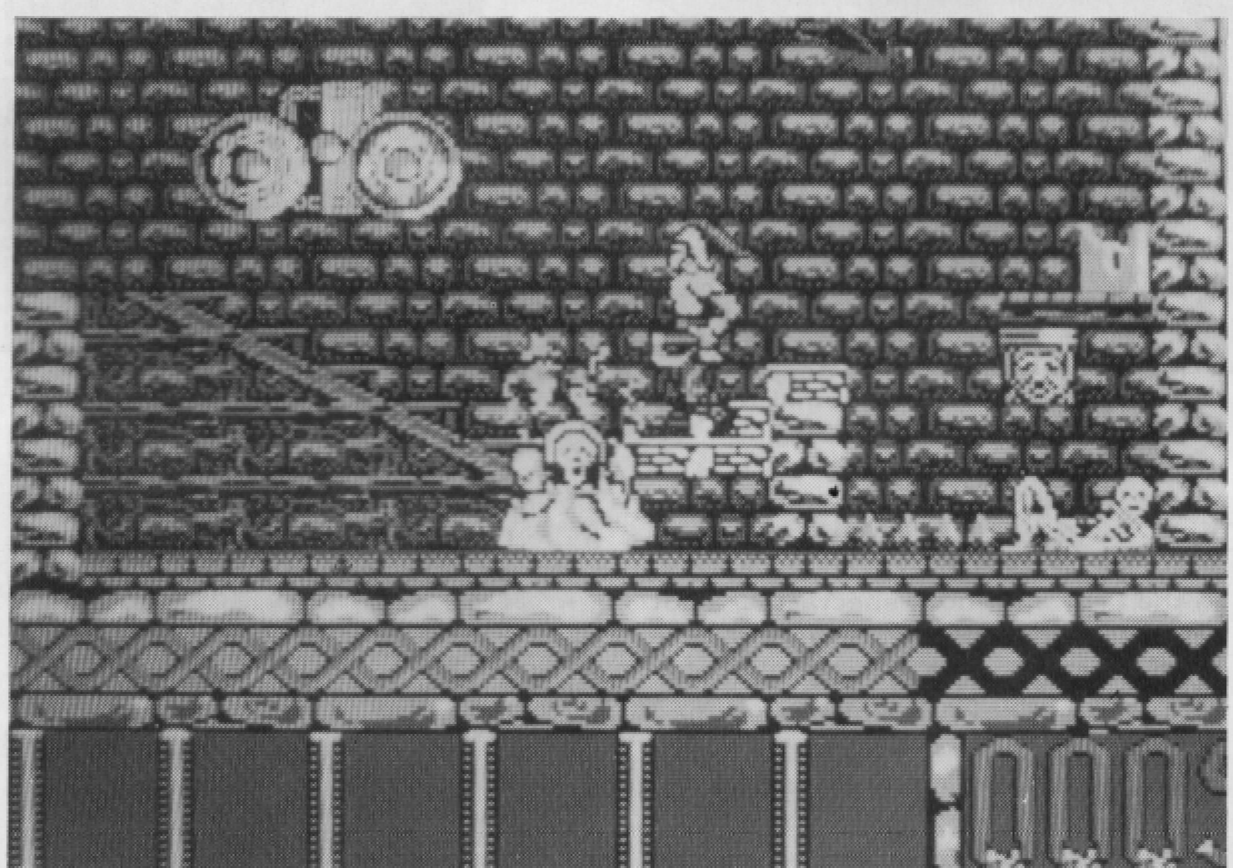
Let me put it another way. Climb the stairs, walk along the platforms, watch out for the bad guys who deplete your energy, and wander about finding the lumps of cement that form the runes.

OK, it's easy to make things sound banal, but for the first half hour or so I couldn't find anything distinctive at all. There's nothing actually wrong with it – average graphics, tolerable sound, functional plot... but actually raising enthusiasm proved a little difficult.

It plays like this: you control brave Artura – a moderately detailed knight moving him through doorways, sometimes jumping across platforms, always trying to avoid or kill soldiers, rats, spiders, sorcerers and other bad guys that get in your way. Some are easy to kill, while others need several hits. All deplete your energy reserve quickly if you come into contact with them. Rune sections assemble, bit by bit, in nine slots at the bottom of the playing area when you find them.

Now you don't have to have played many games to recognise this as your standard arcade adventure plot. Pret-





One of the most vital rune pieces. But how to get it without suffering the same fate as the poor guy in the right hand corner...

ty dull I thought until I started to actually find pieces of the runes...

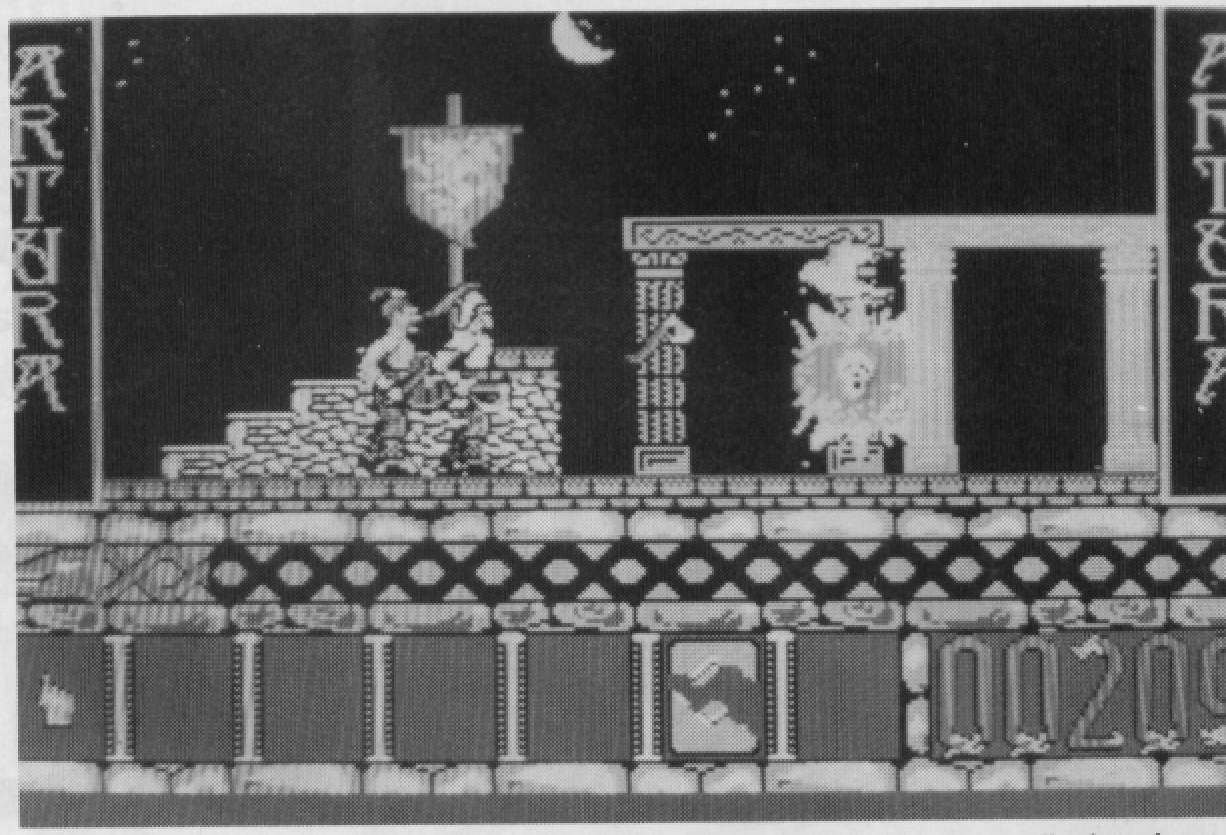
As you play, you start to find that, despite the over-familiarity of the ideas, the gameplay – in terms of how hard it gets and how quickly – gives new challenges just as you begin to think there is no more to it.

I discovered the final piece to make my first complete rune just as I was getting fed up – perfect timing because once you get a whole rune the game expands greatly.

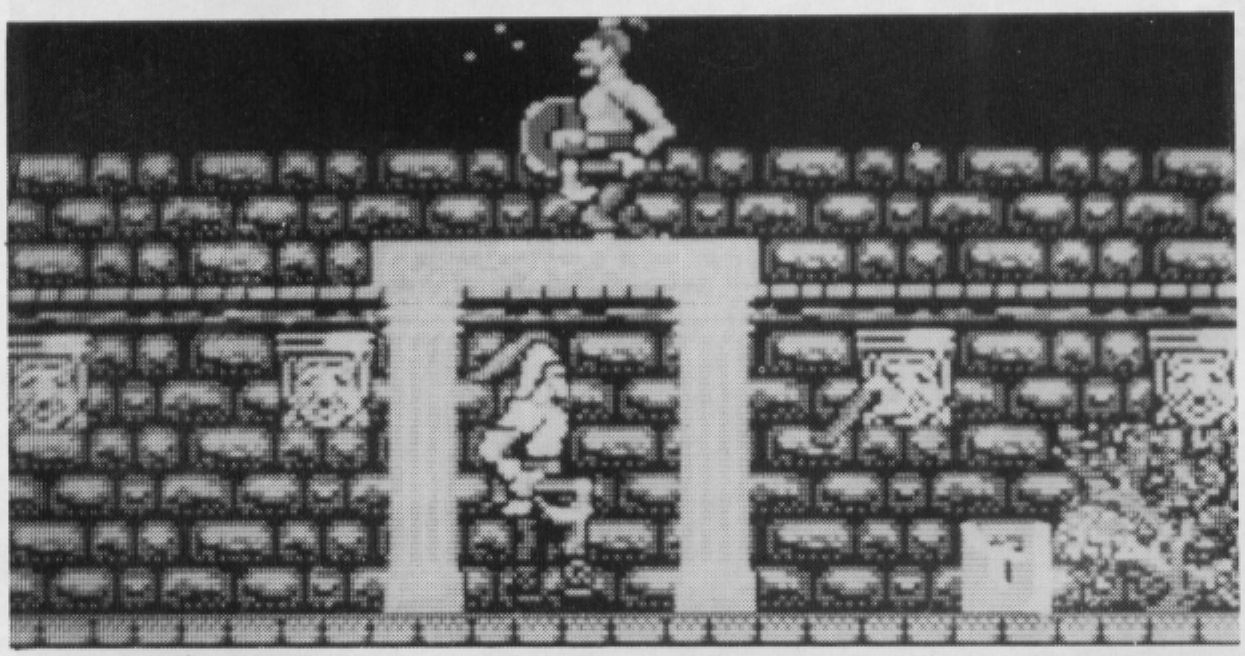
No thanks whatsoever are due to the manual which, though full of scene-setting dodgy Celtic mumbo-jumbo, only does so at the expense of such basic information as what Rune Mode is actually for.

I'll save you two minutes of trouble – if you get a complete rune you can enter Rune Mode, select the complete rune with a moving hand and set it spinning by pushing the fire button a couple of times. What happens then is a bit like 'hyperspace' on **Asteroids** and in the best and most spectacular spot effect I've seen all month sends you to an entirely different bit of the castle.

Having got say 15% into the game I was pretty hooked – finding a lot of fresh areas to explore and seeing some excellent set piece graphics (don't miss the thunderbolt throwers – and do take them on – you never know what they might be hiding).



Guess who's just died? ...and with almost a complete runestone as well... (watch out for the deadly birds!)



Out on the castle ramparts with the first Rune segment in sight...



Death can come suddenly and gruesomely in Artura...

ST

Artura is, in quite a few ways, a creaky old platform and ladders game but it does reward perseverance. The graphics are tolerable, sound attempts to be vaguely Ancient British and sort of succeeds in a fuzzy kind of way, but because of the care that has gone into the gameplay and testing **Artura** is certainly greater than the sum of its parts.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	42%
SOUND	33%
PLAYABILITY	56%
VALUE	40%

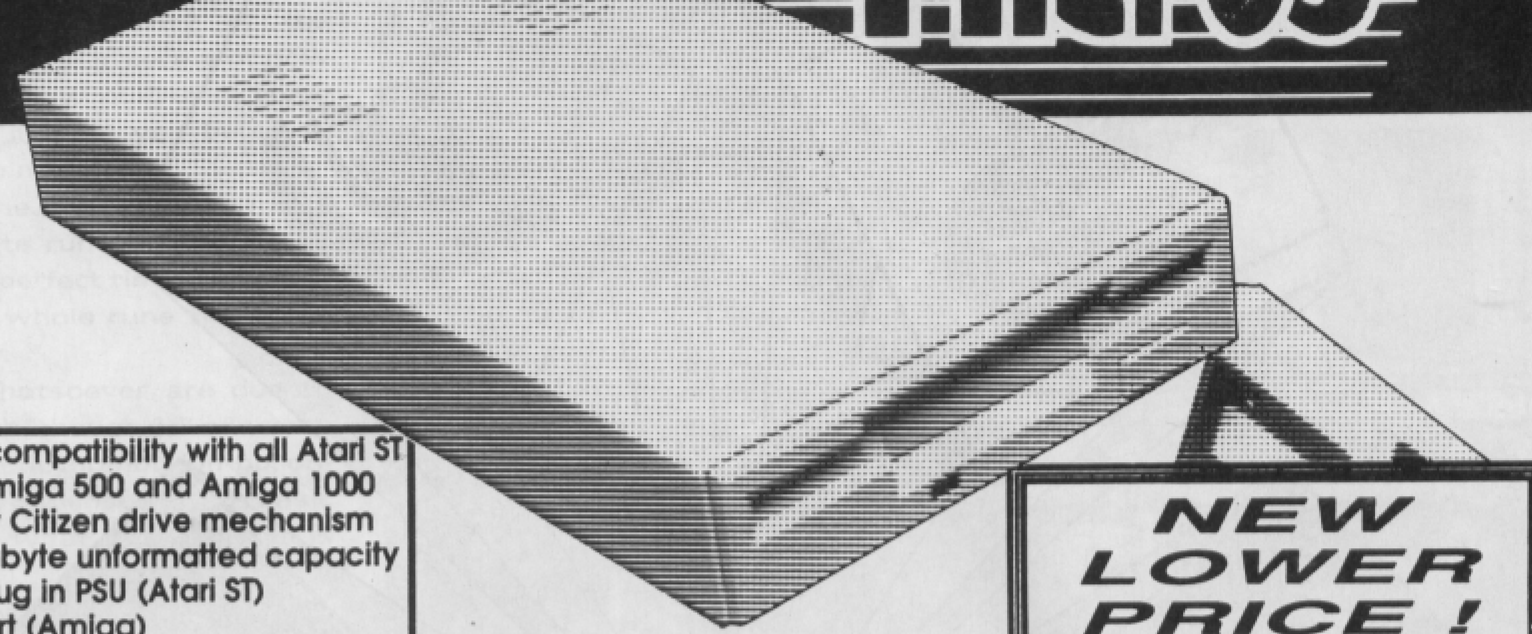
OVERALL 51%

It won't come as any great surprise to learn that Amiga **Artura** is, to all intent and purposes, identical to the ST incarnation. Which means the same uninspired graphics and sound, and the same hackneyed platform and ladders style gameplay. Ah well...

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Cartoon Graphics? Big Fat Hairy Deal. Don't all 16-bit games have them these days? Not like this they don't. The Edge's latest gives a whole new meaning to "just like a cartoon". Gleeful Graham Taylor gets to grips with Garfield.

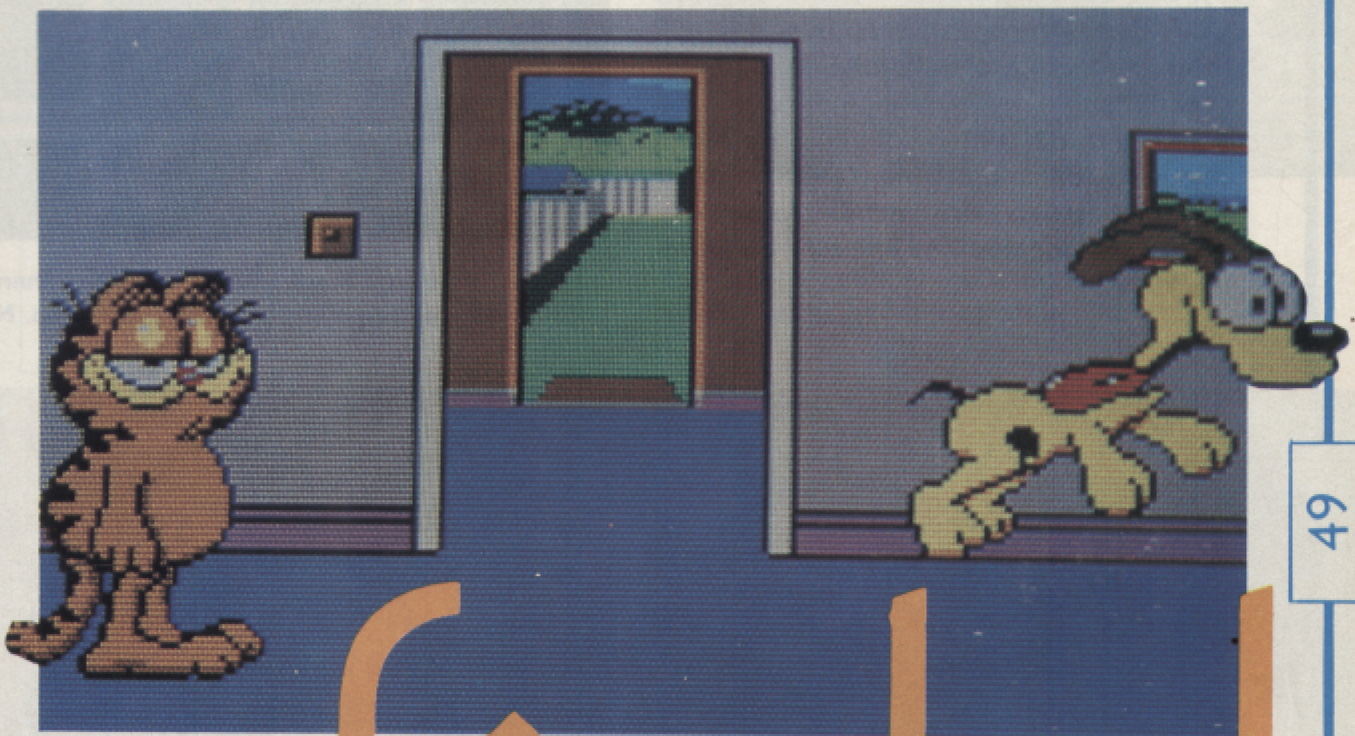
Garfield

Garfield's graphics look exactly like the cartoon, dot for dot, splodge for splodge. It is more than just good programming it's a question of accurately capturing the exact expression and mannerisms of the cartoon originals.

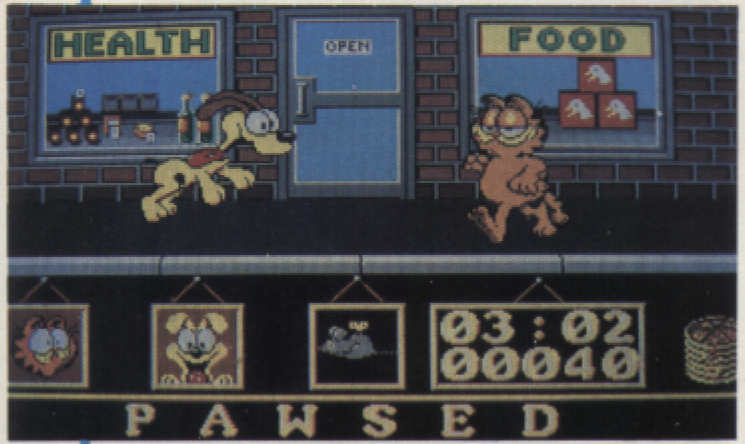
For example, check out Garfield's cheesy grin after kicking Odie into next week, or Odie's dumb loyal cheerfulness after being booted. Even the backgrounds authentically recreate the sort of small mid-western town feel of the originals.

However, in the past many games with marvellous visuals tended to lack something in gameplay. It's the "God what brilliant graphics, now what shall we do with them?" syndrome. Unfortunately, this is partly the case with **Garfield**, which has an authentic plot and some clever touches but lacks a certain logic in the gameplay.

The plot sees Garfield attempting to rescue his beloived Arlene from the city pound. Finding her is one problem, finding enough for Garfield to eat is another. Garfield will eat virtually anything, and if his 'pizza' level should get low this can be a major problem – Garfield may actually get so hungry that he'll eat valuable objects such as spades and flashlights – making it impossible to complete the game!

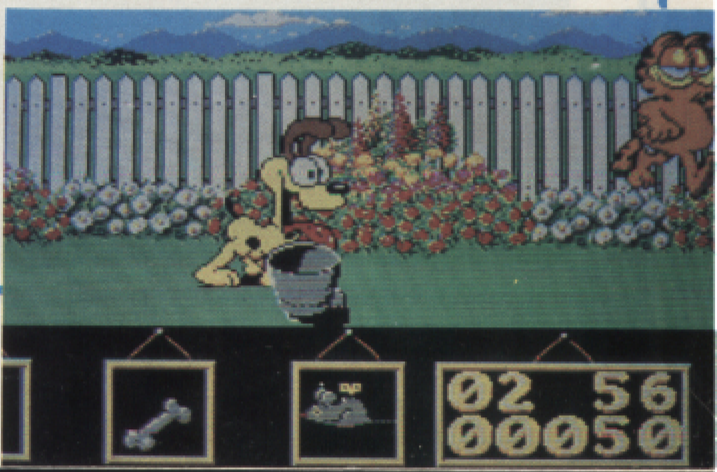


The mechanics are really pretty simpole, even if the individual problems are not. Getting to the pound and releasing Arlene involves solving dozens of other problems – finding Nermal (the world's cutest kitten), opening doors etc. In each case the solution is basically picking up the right object and putting it in the right place – almost like an adventure game.



The health food shop. No lasagne, so Garfield may not be immediately interested, but if he investigates further he may find a rather useful doughnut.

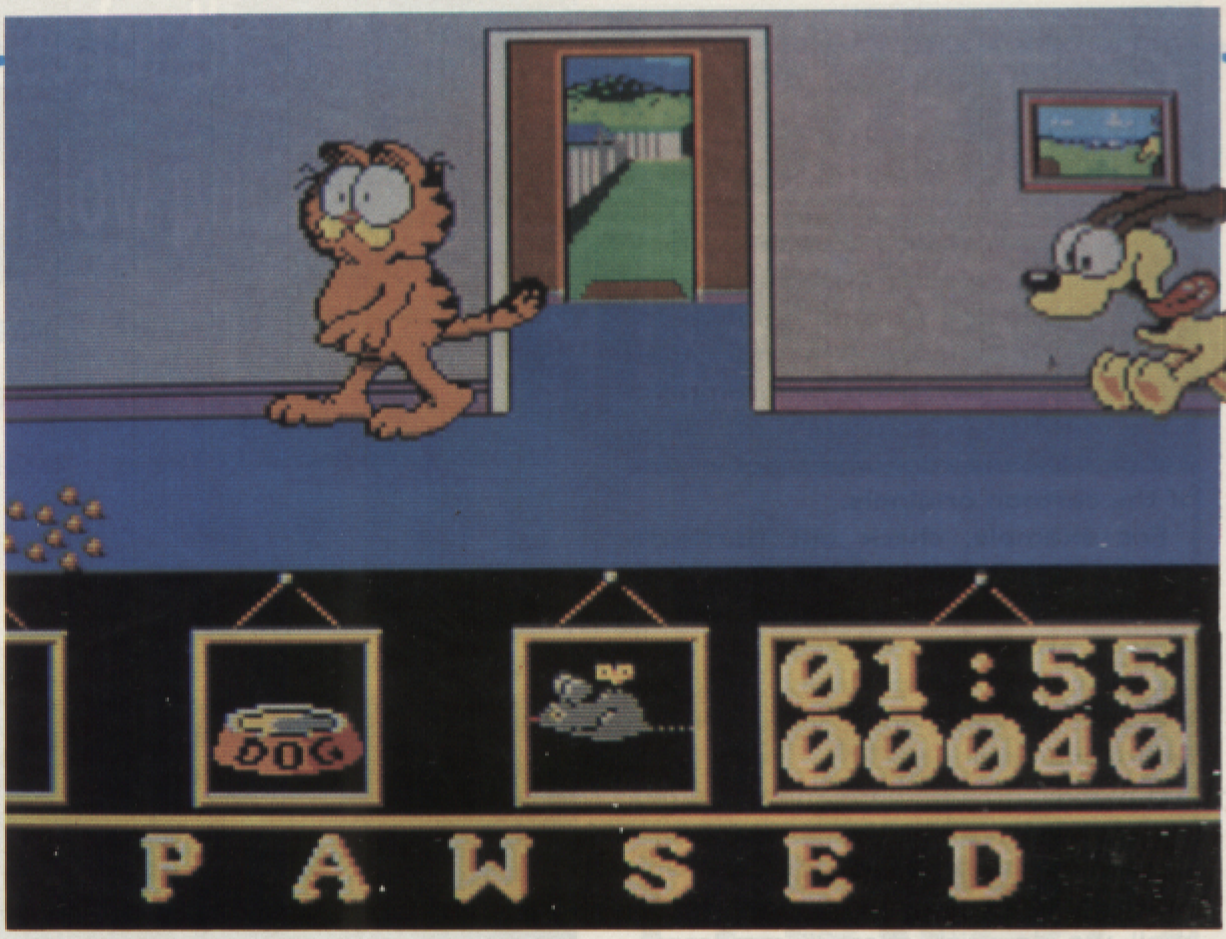
Plenty of useful objects to be found and used in the garden (but this isn't one of them). This brings a whole new meaning to the phrase 'kicking the bucket'.



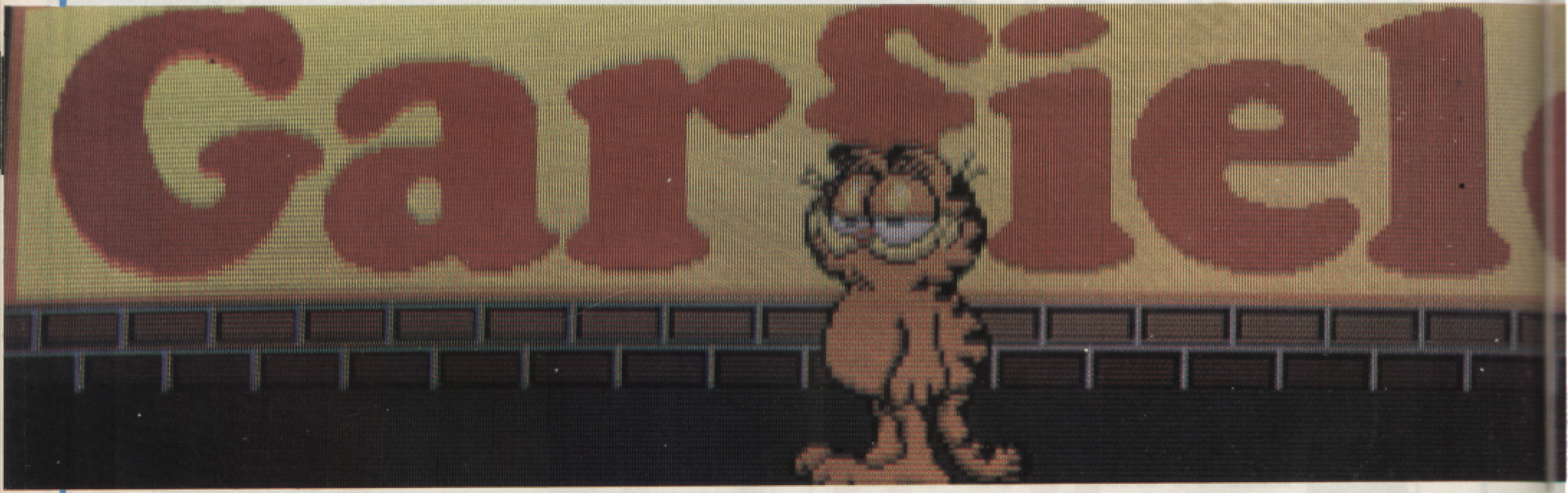


The major problem is that, in some cases, the link between what object has to be put where (and what it does) ie very tenuous. Here is an example (the only one I'm going to give away) you start in the house and soon discover with what looks like a giant catflap. You want to open this catflap – here's how: get the spade from the shed and drop it by the bone which is by the catflap, pick up the bone and drop it and it will start bouncing and lo! the flap opens. Logical eh?

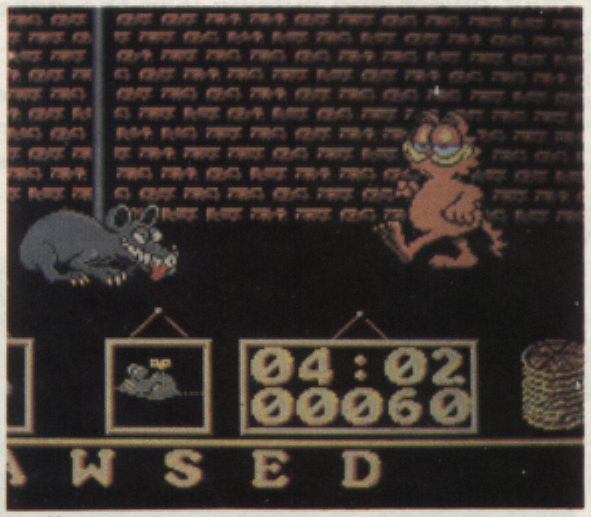
To be fair that is probably the most odd solution to a problem I've found so far but there are other examples where the logic is not entirely convincing.

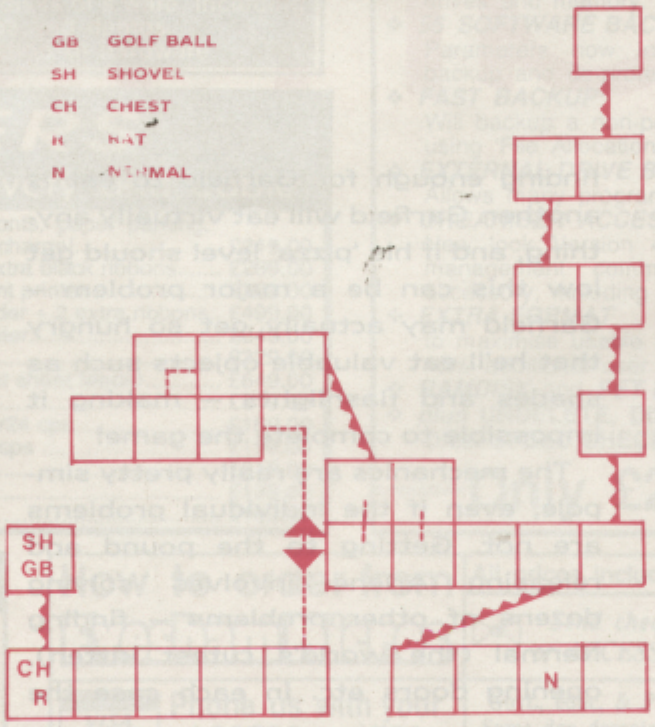


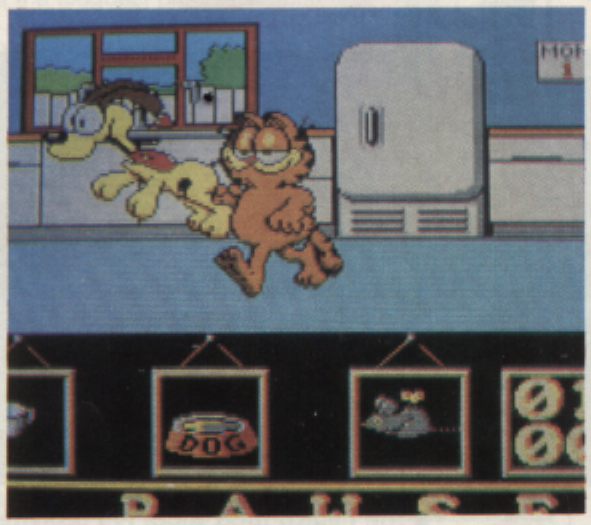
Pick up those aniseed balls, give them to Odie and that should stop him reducing your pizza power when he passes you. Now ain't that handy?



Down in the sewers our feline friend has fallen foul to a rat that looks like it's been at Jon's vitamin pills. That ladder will lead him to safety, but how does he reach it?







Garfield's favourite place (generally because this is where all the lasagne is to be found).



And why is our fat feline friend so happy? Probably because he's just found out there's a pizza partly just a couple of screens away.

ST The graphics remain amazingly expressive and there are dozens of little 'extras' to keep your interest (try setting Garfield to work on the chair). I'm not entirely convinced by the gameplay, but it could be that I'm just particularly sensitive to what I would call "unfair". The sound effects are OK, but you may find the jaunty theme tun a little irritating after a while. Whatever – you must try and see it – if only for the graphics.

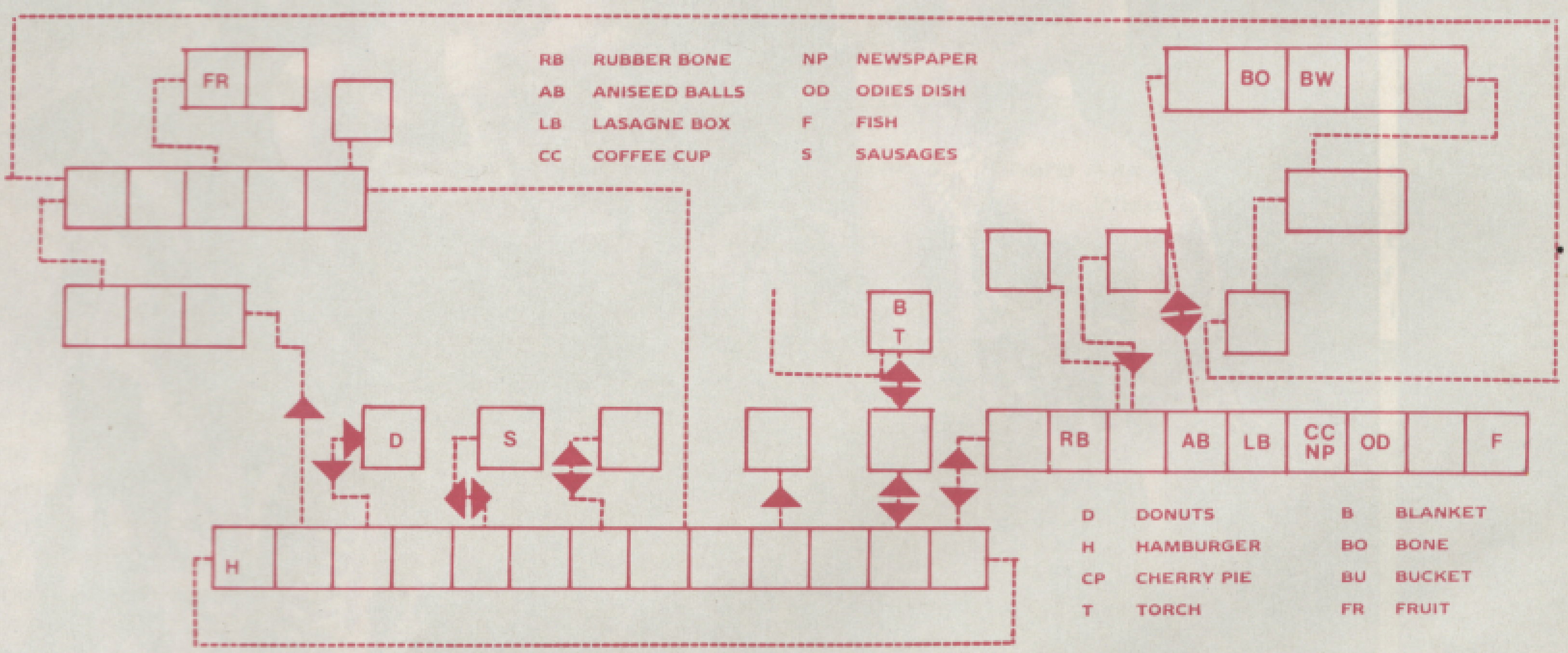
PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	81%
SOUND	69%
PLAYABILITY	68%
VALUE	62%

OVERALL 74%

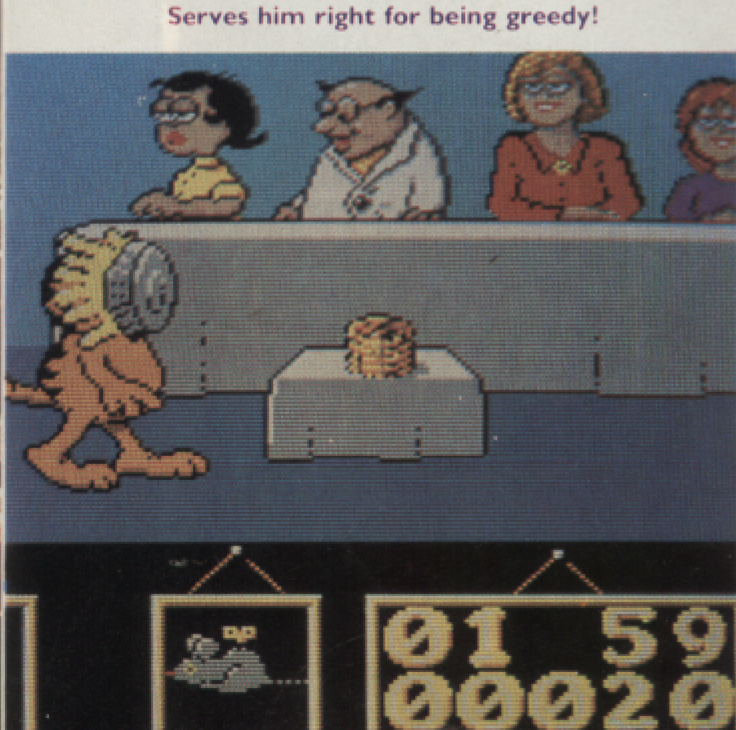


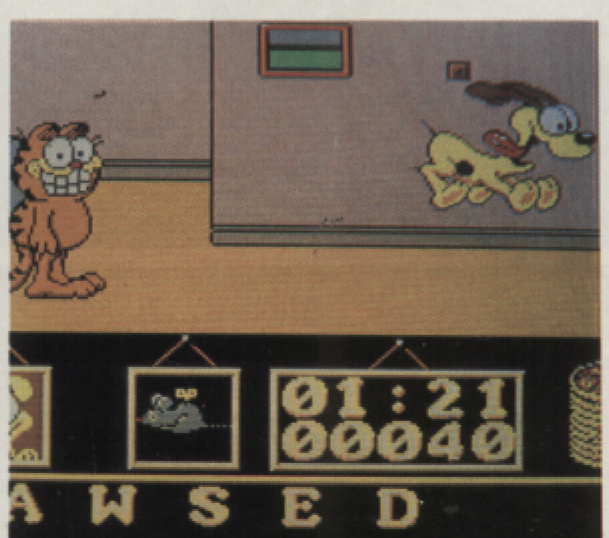
If you were wise enough to pick up the golf ball from the shed you can have a quick game by trying to punt it into the hole to (perhaps) win a prize.





SLAT! While chomping away at the pizza party Garfield gets a custard pie in the kisser (must be Monday) and subsequently falls back down into the sewers. Serves him right for being greedy!



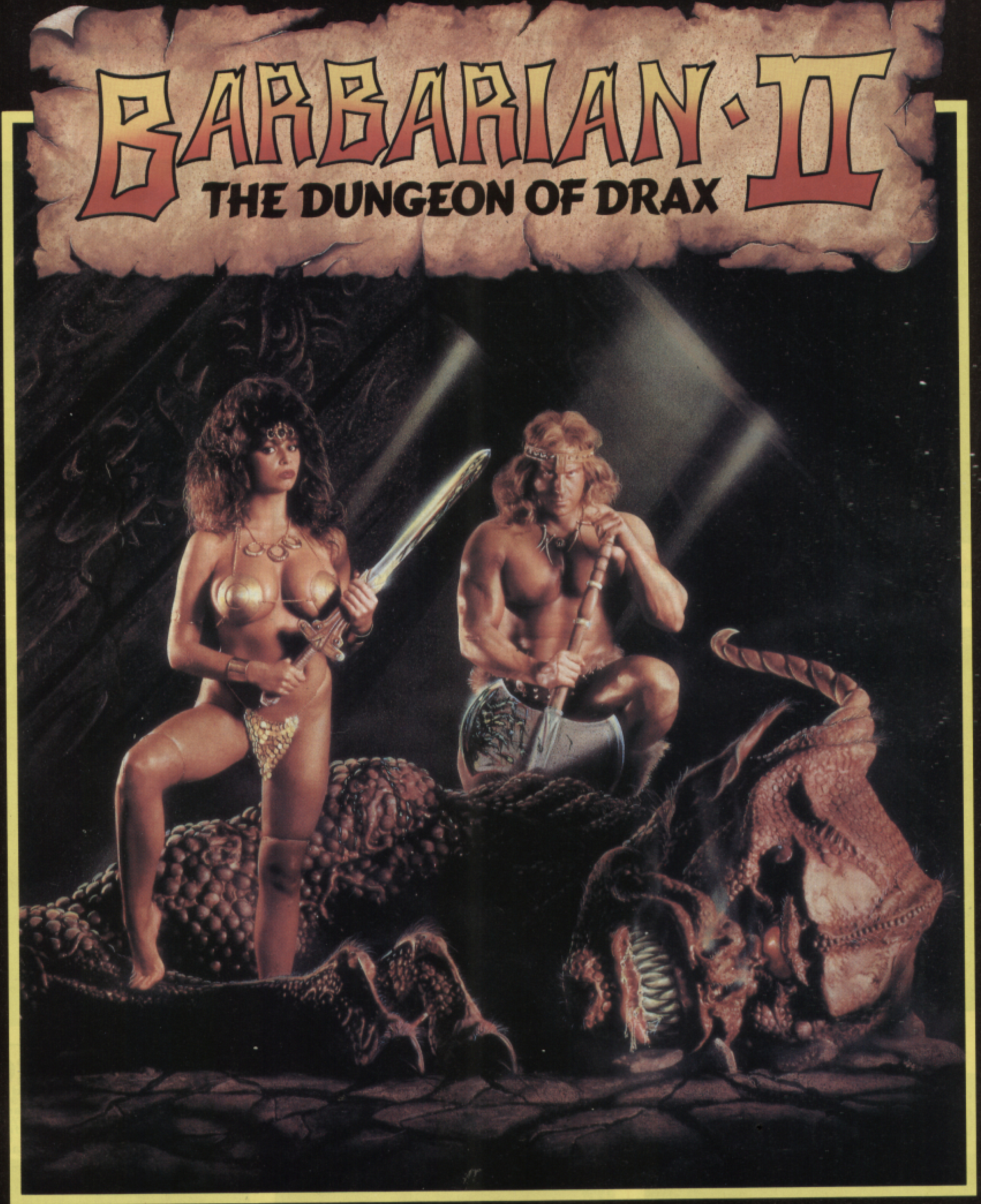


Garfield grins and jon looks on as poor old Odie gets another kicking. Quick, phone the humane society.

A In terms of both graphics and gameplay the Amiga and ST versions of Garfield are exactly the same. As in becoming increasingly common only the sound differs with the Amiga track making use of the machines better sound facilities.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	81%
SOUND	69%
PLAYABILITY	68%
VALUE	62%

OVERALL 74%



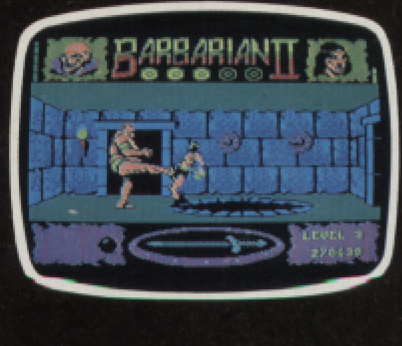
Spectrum Version

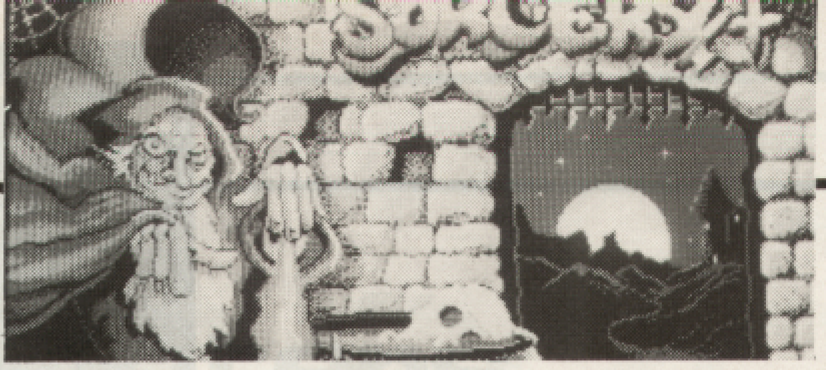


Amiga Version

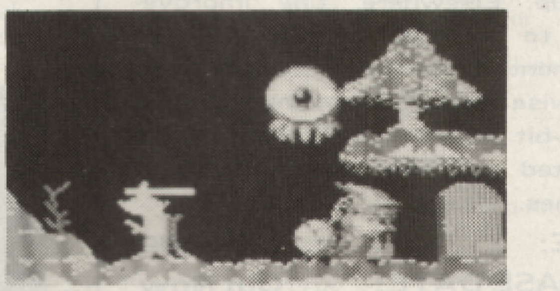


C64 Version





Sorcery Plus



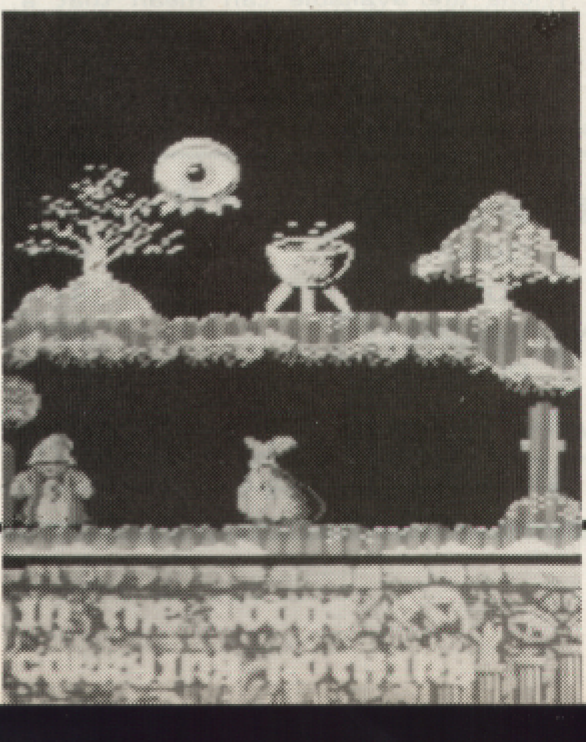
Eye of newt and wing of bat... an ancient spell or the recipe for Wimpy's spicy beanburger? Virgin provided the game, Ciarán Brennan donated the fingers, and then as if by magic the review appeared.

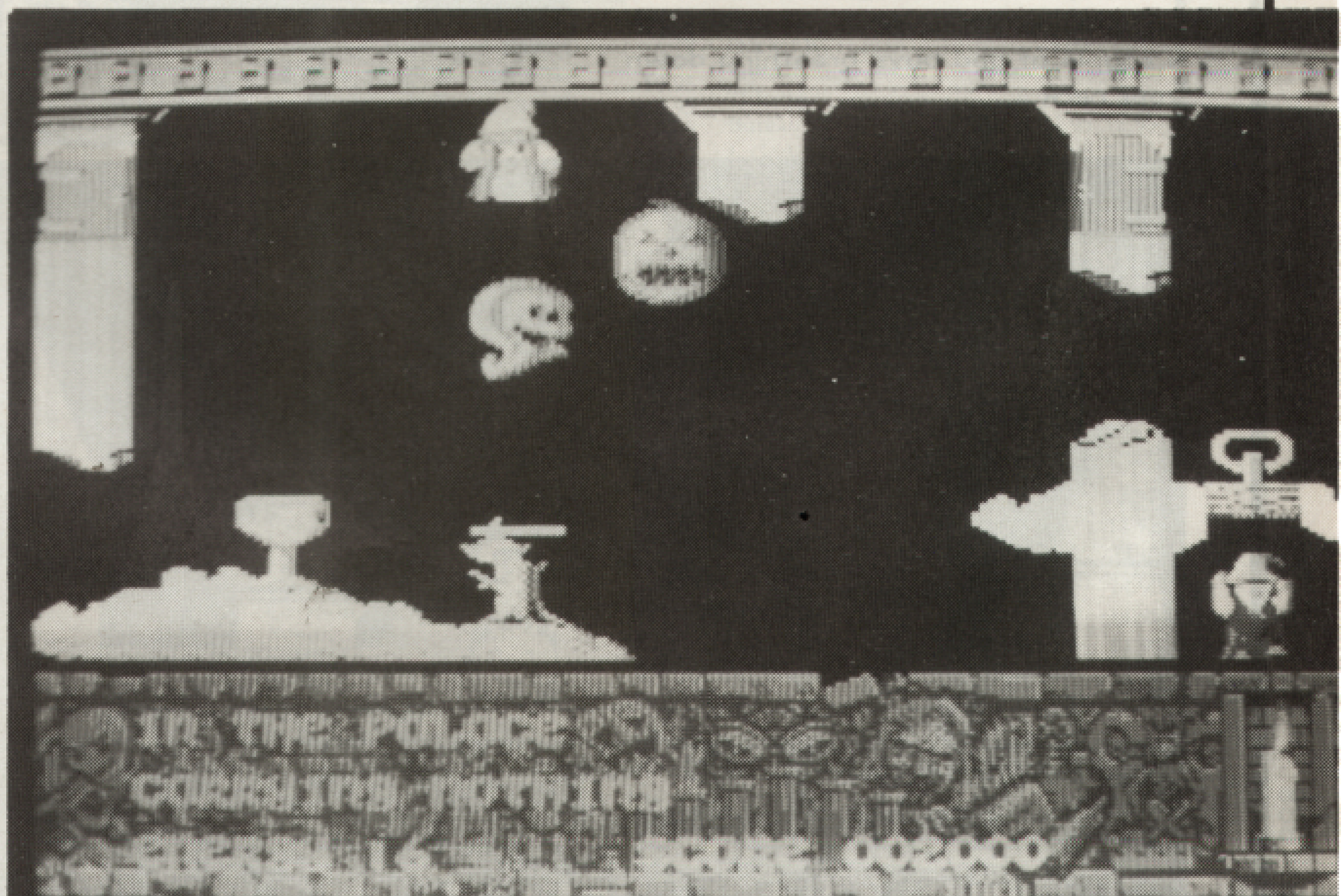
Sorcery Plus takes place deep in the dark ages, in a time where the forces of evil have taken over and imprisoned all of the benevolent wizards. All that is except you, who for some reason have been left to roam the land and are now the last hope for the good wizards... and therefore the world.

The dark ages consisted of 75 static screens full of platforms, doors, clouds, walls, useful objects and of course the inevitable bad guys. The objective is to find your way around, working out the fastest and safest paths and freeing your fellow wizards who appear along the way.

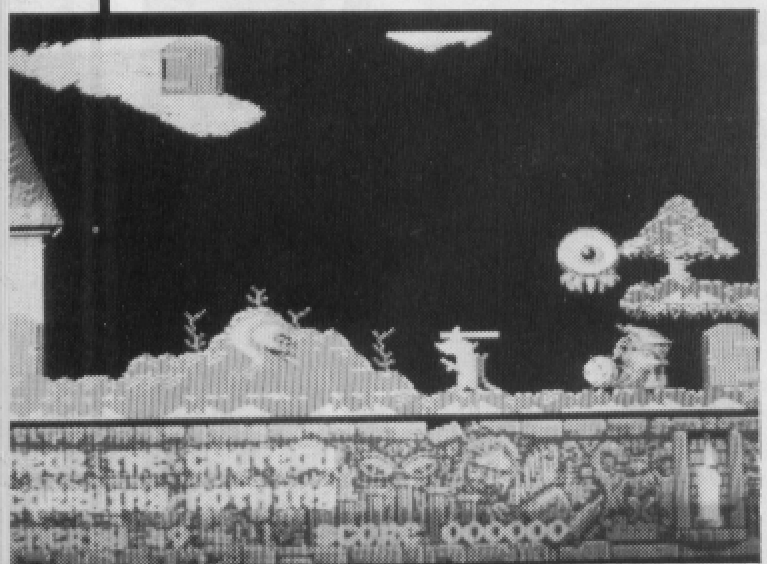
The world is littered with all sorts of rubbish, some of which is useful, and some of which isn't. For example a Sharp Axe disposes of the deadly Will 'O The Wisp, but it's totally ineffective against the Flying Eye (thank you, Russ Kane). A process of trial and error deduces which object is useful in

Pick up the bag of spells for protection, but how do you get up to the cauldron?





Whoops, there's a pumpkin on my tail – and a gribbly green thing! Maybe that goblet will help.



every situation, but it doesn't take a Mensa candidate to work out that when the going gets tough a Strong Sword is going to be a sight more useful than a Little Lyre.

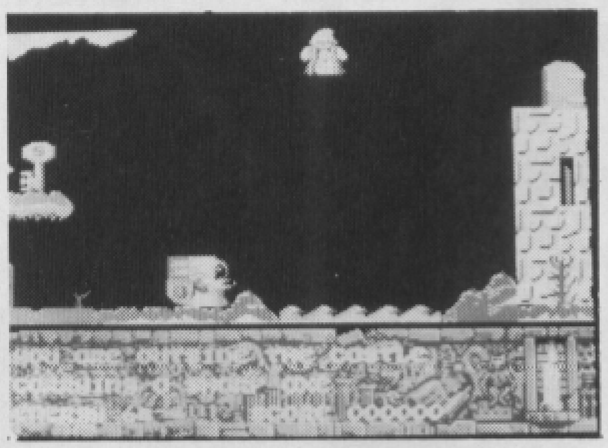
Before too long it becomes obvious that there's a pattern just waiting to be worked out. It's a real case of cause and effect here, as each new opened door leads to a fresh set of problems where it may be necessary to back-track for a couple of screens before finding the solution. A nice touch is that the game doesn't open on the same screen each time, which means you may be thrown right in at the deep end on a totally unfamiliar screen with a couple of bad buys breathing down your neck...

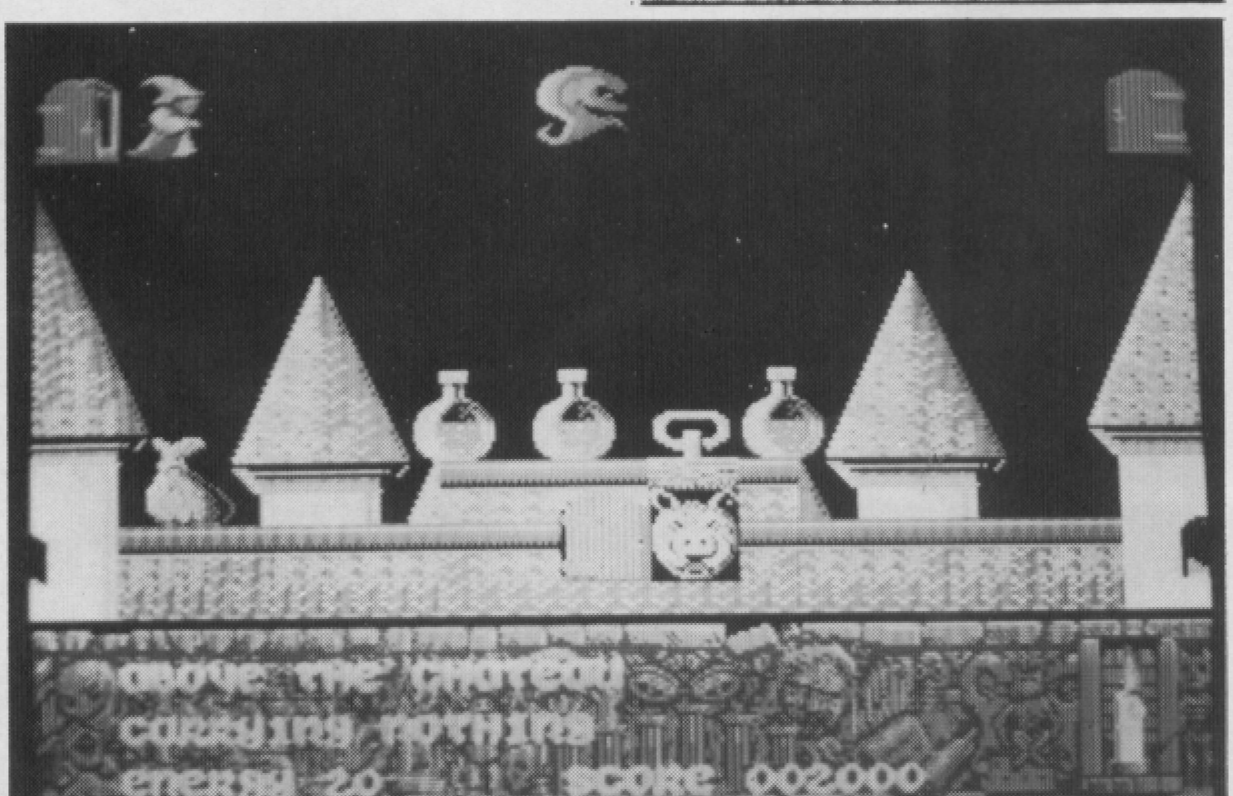
A

The Amiga version is slightly better in all respects, with the improved sound providing the greatest enhancement. A constantly howling wind, realistic thunder rolls and creepy creaking doors add an extra touch ,of atmosphere that's missing from the Atari's make-up. Elsewhere, tiny improvements to the graphics and speed of movement finish off the package. Otherwise the game remains a competent 8-bit 'search and collect' game promoted to two vastly superior machines.

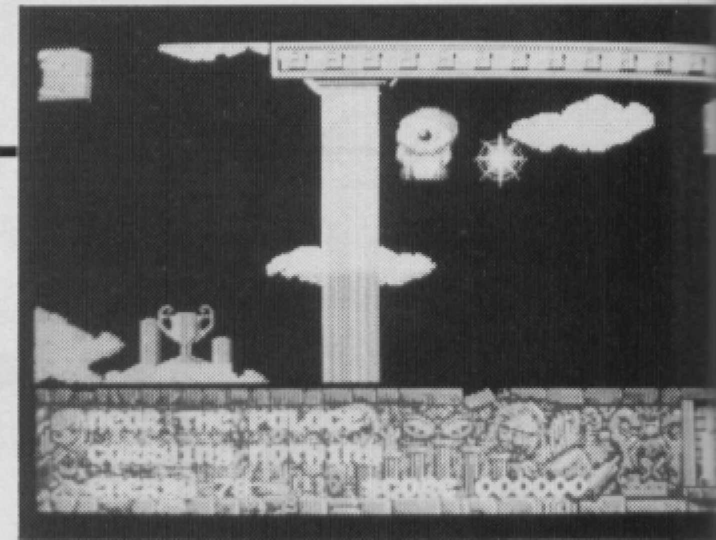
PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	52%
SOUND	56%
VALUE	64%
PLAYABILITY	52%

OVERALL 58%

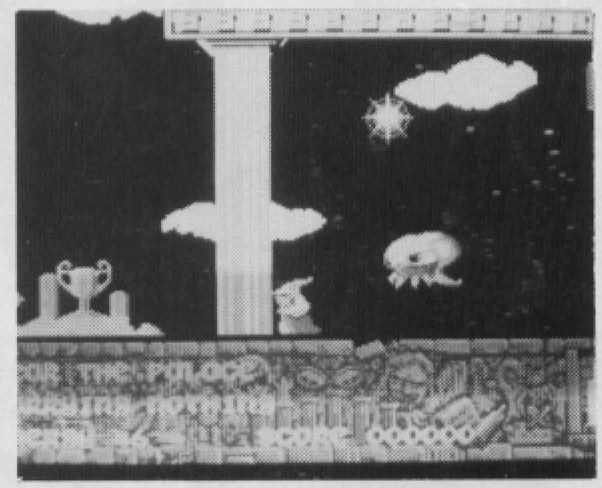




The bag of spells and secret potions are easy enough to pick up, but the keystone will probably prove a little more difficult to remove.



The shooting star is just out of reach, basically because you're being eaten alive by the Flying Eye.



At last, freedom! But it's still going to be tough to safely reach the Shooting Star.

ST

It's magic! the ST has been transformed into an Amstrad CPC... there's witchcraft afoot. the graphics do look remarkably Amstradish, but at least they're clear and uncluttered. The characters move smoothly around the screen, and the backgrounds change without so much as a flicker. The beeps and squelches are far from spectacular, but they suit the game's quirky nature and never grate on the nerves. the drawbacks are more related to the manner of the game rather than its implementation – the idea dates back almost to the era in which it's set, so most people will have seen a couple of similar efforts in the past. Oh, and one more thing, the fact that there's only one life available can mean that a player's first few attempts are rather short-lived – but stick with it and you may find that perseverence reaps its own rewards.

PRICE:	£19.95
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	44%
SOUND	41%
VALUE	60%
PLAYABILITY	49%

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TIPS

It's all very well knowing which games are worthy of your undivided attention, but there comes a time when someone, somewhere needs to know more than just how well they play. "How do I get past...?" "What do I do when...?" These are typical pleas for help. Can your conscience take any more? If you happen to have stumbled across any useful cheat modes, clever tactics or original listings which could bring hand relief to frustrated games players, or you just happen to be Plain cocky and can provide general hints for any game available, why not play the Good Samaritan and share your knowledge? Send anything remotely worthwhile to TIPS, The One, Priority Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. And just to make it worth your while there's software up for grabs for the sender of the best original tips we print each month.

STARGLIDER II

Rainbird

Start the game and select F for fixed sights. Slow the ship down to a dead stop and then do the following...

(AMIGA) Press BACKSPACE to pause the game.

(ST) Press DELETE to pause the game.

Now type WERE ON A MISSION FROM GOD (including the spaces) and press '1' on the main keyboard. The shield and energy levels should drop to zero, which means the cheat has been activated. Now press K to get your hands on ALL the weapons, including the Neutron Bomb. If the weapons run out at any time, just press K again. Thank you Gordon Keenan of Glasgow.

BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN

Electra

Type ELV to activate the cheat mode and then hit the function keys for extra weapons. Here's a rundown of what each one does...

F 1 Scatterbolts
F 2 Multiple Fire
F 3 Auto-Repeat Saturation Fire
F 4 Armour Missile
F 5 Stun
F 6 Neutron Bomb
F 7 Clone Ship
F 8 Shield
F 9 Skip Level
F10 Extra power bars

ELIMINATOR

Hewson

Here are most of the passcodes to John Phillips' superlative race 'n' blast game, courtesy of Ian Walpole of Cardiff.

STAGE	CODE
2	AMEOBA
3	BLOOOP
4	CHEEKI
5	DOINOK
6	ENIGMA
8	GEEGEE
9	HANDEL
11	JAMMIN
13	LAPDOG
14	MIKADO

HELTER SKELTER

Audiogenic

Here are the passwords for those elusive later levels, thanks to T Wilkinson of Hull...

LEVEL	PASSWORD
11	SPIN
21	FLIP
31	BALL
41	GOAL
51	LEFT
61	TWIN
71	PLAY

VIRUS

Firebird

David Braben's classic has been causing much hair-pulling recently, and at last we can put an end to it all by printing the cheat mode. The man to thank is D Cork of Kent. While playing, hold down ENTER on the numeric keypad and hit P to pause the game. While still holding down ENTER, hit O to activate the cheat mode, indicated by the appearance of a red bar. Now you can press...

F To restore your fuel level to maximum.
L To add one life and one missile.
O To activate the demo mode.
C To turn on the weird special effects mode.
N To resume normal play.

STARGOOSE

Logotron

George Bradshaw of Wishaw in Scotland has been playing Stargoose on the ST and has discovered that if you hit all the function keys from F1 through to F10, unlimited protection is yours.

Speedball



GET READY

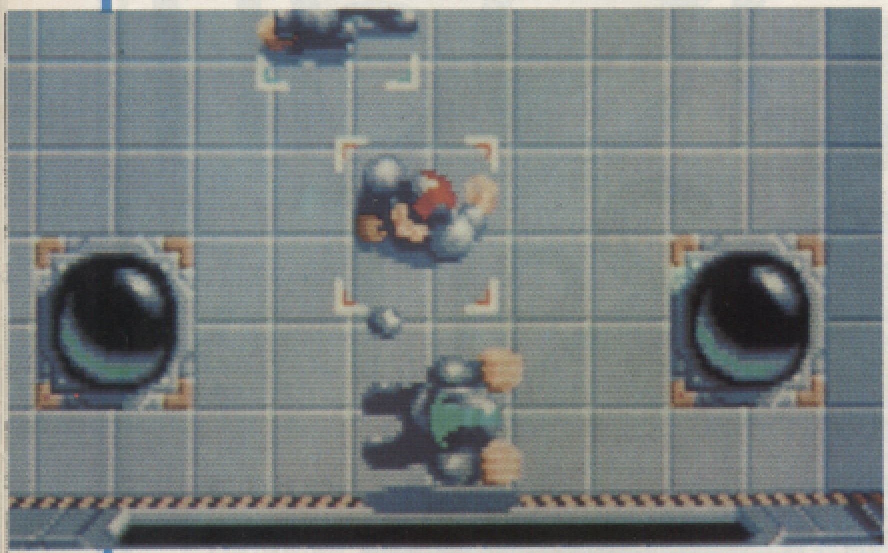
To start with, let's dispel a myth: no team is better than another. Each has one strength and one weakness, so play a few practice matches and decide which team suits your style of play. Sort out a second choice in case your favourite team is selected by another player. In a two player game it's best to play green as for some unknown reason it seems easier to play up the pitch.

Ardent Speedballers Gary Whitta and Gary Penn conspire with the game's originators, The Bitmap Brothers, to bring you the definitive guide to the definitive sport simulation.



ATTACK OFF THE WALL SHOT

Before the ball is launched, move the joystick in the direction of the launcher and continually tap the fire button. This slides your player into the launcher the moment the ball is released and, de-



pending on the direction that the ball was launched, should result in immediate possession. Continue running diagonally until you run into the wall. Now stab the fire button to throw the ball at waist height. This ALWAYS results in an on-target shot (provided there are no domes in the way) and is extremely difficult for the 'keeper to react to. Proficient players have been clocked as scoring goals in under two seconds after launch time with this technique. It works best in one player mode as the computer opposition (especially the lower-ranked teams) have no strategy for dealing with this kind of attack. Human opponents however, normally catch on after a few games and put a stop to it by sliding into the launcher and tackling, or using their defence to intercept the ball or opponent.

SEND THE 'KEEPER THE WRONG WAY

A handy technique to employ when it's one on one between you and the 'keeper and there's no time for a defender to arrive on the scene. Stand in front of the goalie in roughly the position shown and dance about for a bit. He should get worried and sooner or later will dive instinctively, leaving you with a clear second or two to shoot into the now open goal. It's worth noting however, that this tactic rarely works against any of the computer teams.

NOBBLE THE 'KEEPER

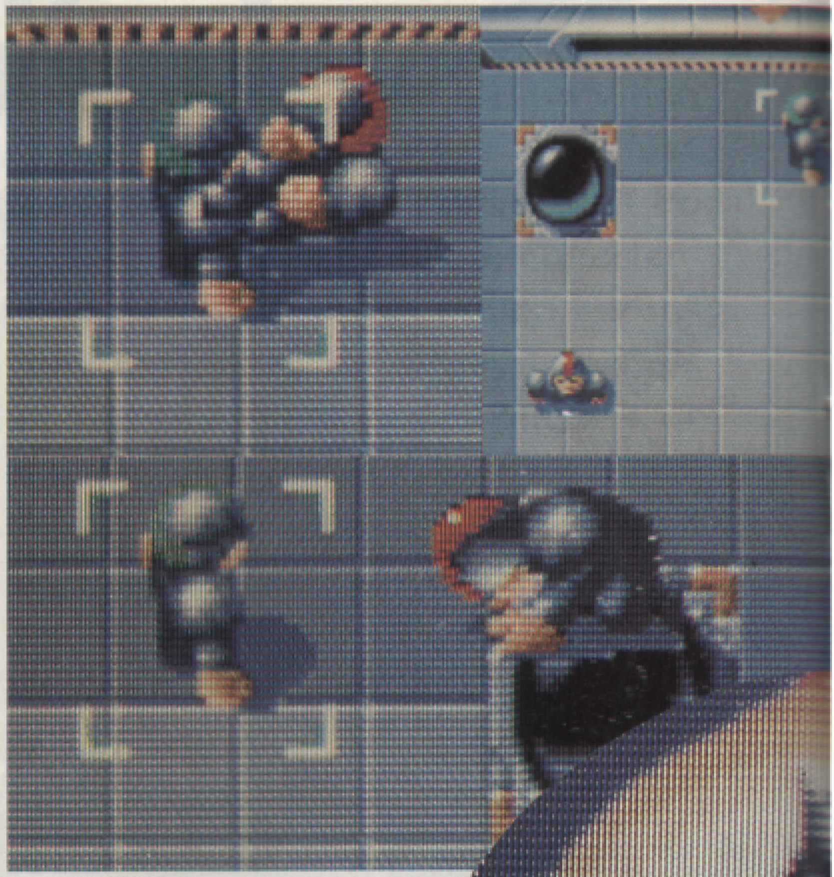
Why not? Launch a long shot and, as it flies towards the goalmouth, use one of your strikers to nobble the 'keeper and send him flying out of the goalmouth, leaving the ball to sail into the open goal.

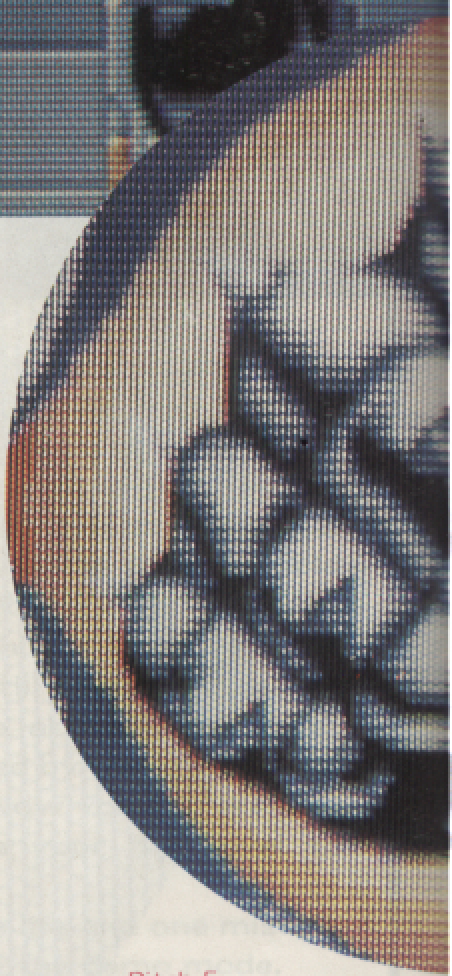
IN GENERAL

▶ Diagonal shots are far more difficult to save, especially off the wall.

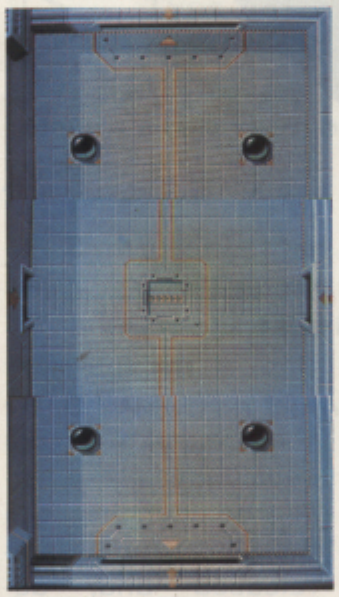
▶ An extremely satisfying way to score is to hit a high lob into the goal. It's not easy, but if you're feeling cocky the best place to try from is the area around the two warp doors in the centre of the pitch. But remember: only a healthy player can lob the ball roughly half the length of the pitch.

▶ Keep moving and pass as often as possible, chances are there will be someone to receive any blind passes. Remember: **Speedball** is a team sport.

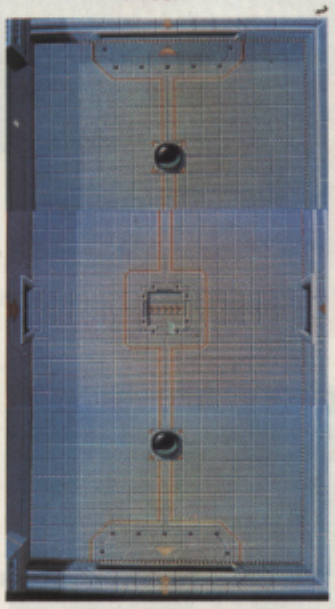




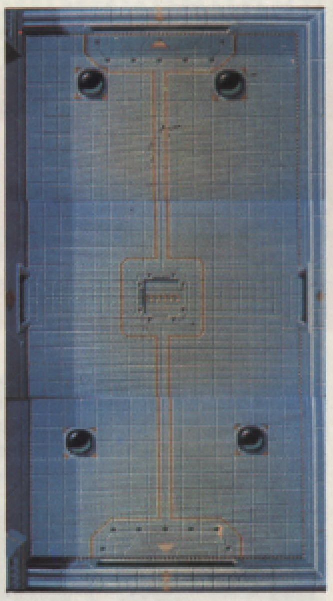
Pitch 1



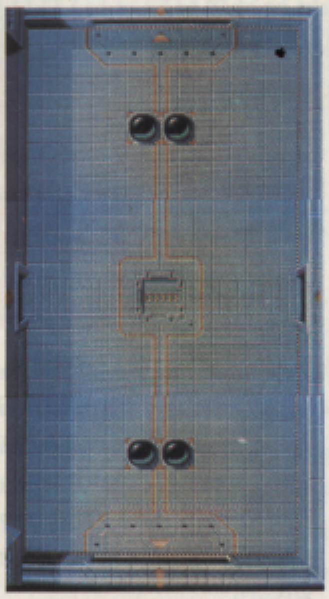
Pitch 2



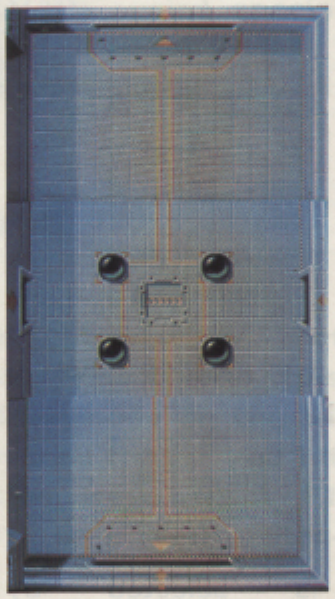
Pitch 3



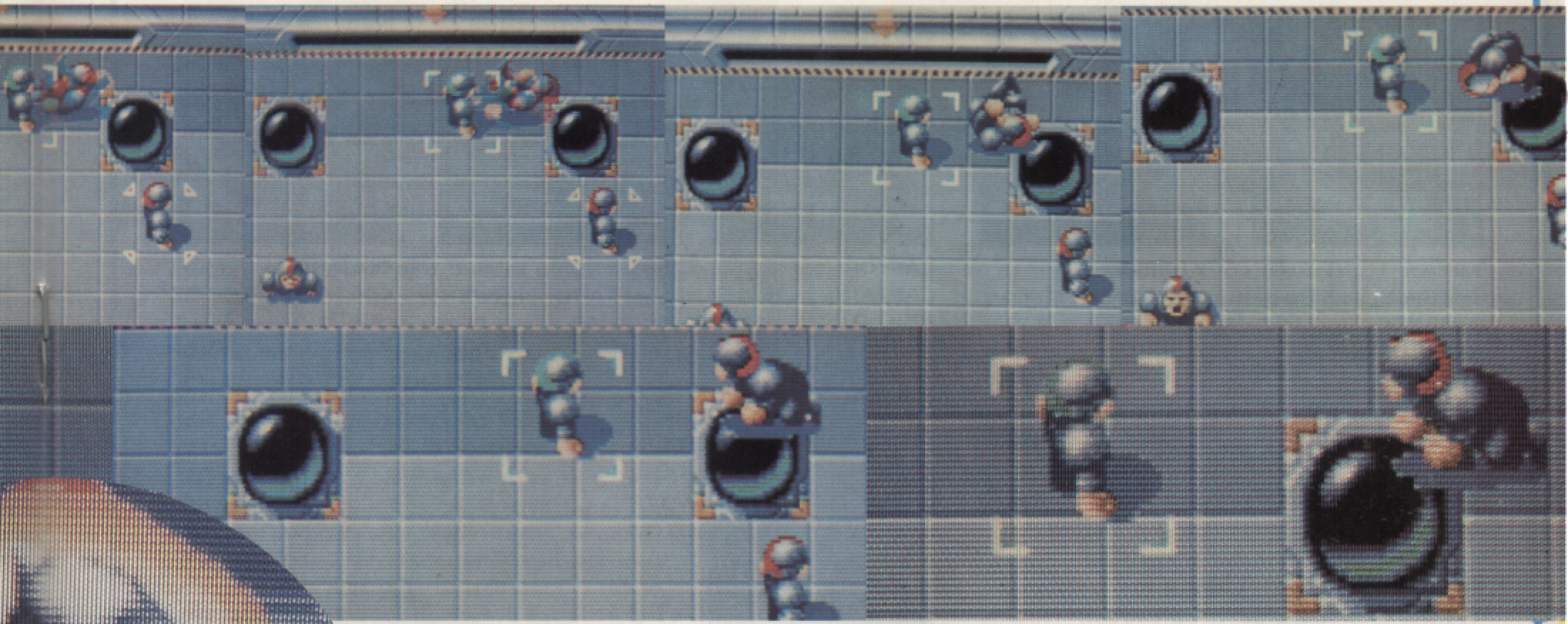
Pitch 4

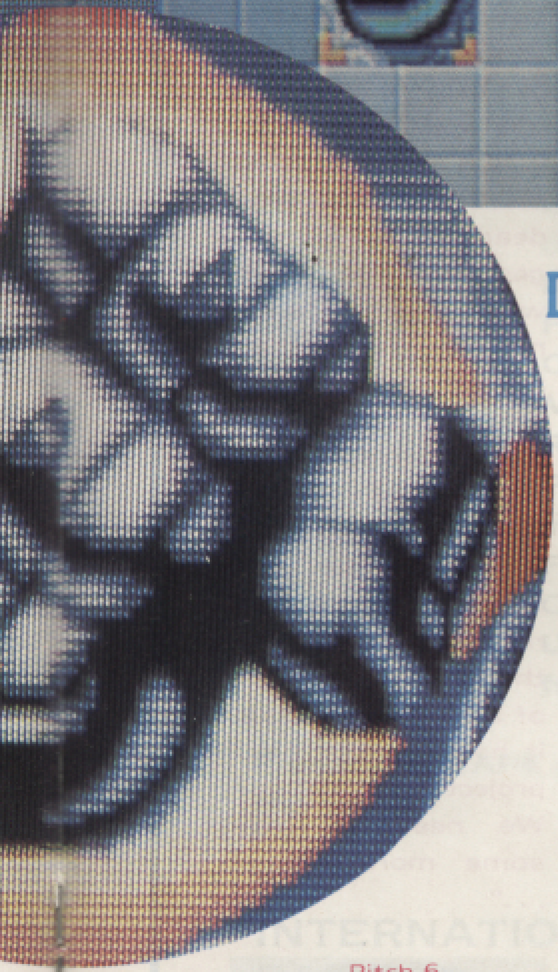


Pitch 5









DEFENCE

IN GENERAL

Only dive as a last resort. It takes time to recover, and leaves the goalmouth wide open.

If you have a player in defence, slide him into the ball to catch it and clear it. But be careful not to score an own goal.

When an opposing player is on the attack, move your 'keeper into the centre of the goal, rather than to one side, as this leaves less of the goal to cover.

SOME TRIVIA

▶The pitch is approximately 48m long, 27m wide and 9m deep, with the goalmouths around 1.3m high. A game lasts roughly three minutes, with extra time lasting one minute. The timer only ticks down when the ball is in play.

▶Stand right next to the goal and lob the ball into it. Now the ball will be thrown into the air at launch. A similar effect is achieved with the warps either side of the pitch.

STAMINA

▶Lost when tackled, stamina refers to the maximum level of energy which is divided amont the team members. Maximum Stamina: 059.

POWER

▶The greater your power, the more energy is removed from the opposition when tackling.

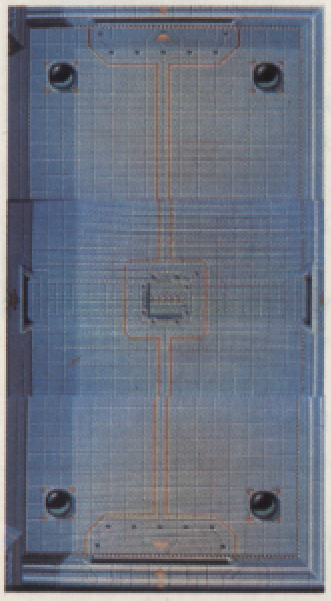
Maximum Power: 300.

SKILL

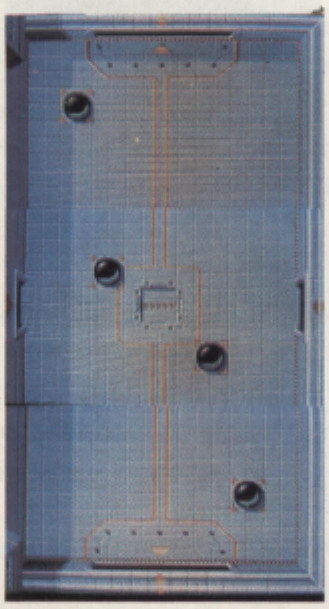
▶The higher your skill rating, the better your tackling ability.

Maximum Skill: 256.

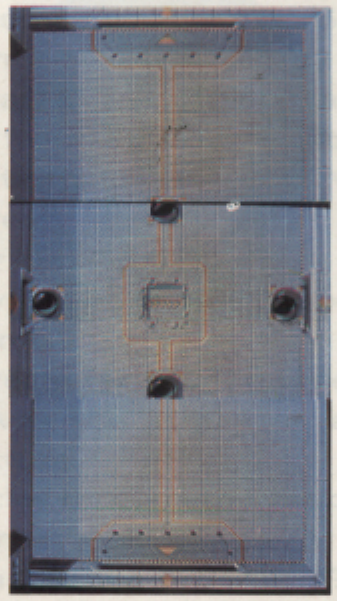
Pitch 6



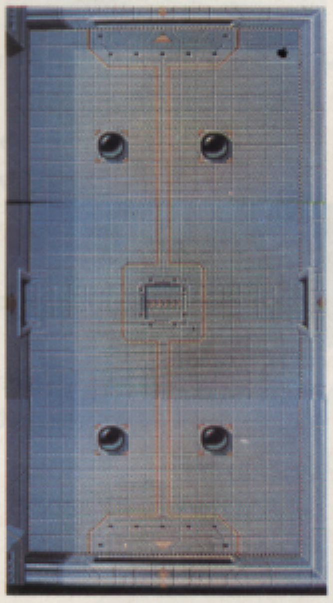
Pitch 7



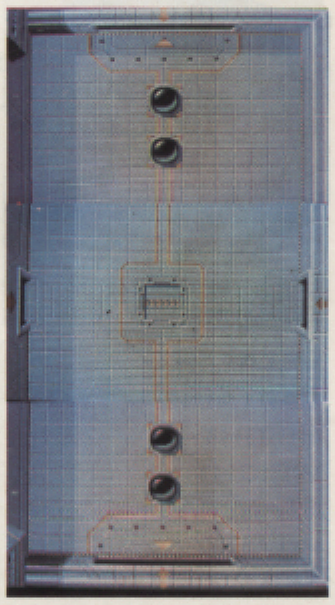
Pitch 8



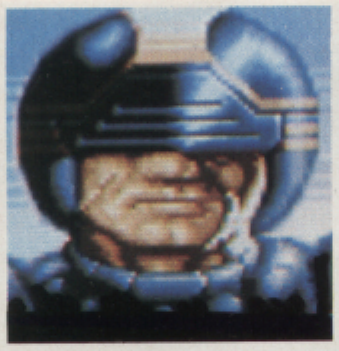
Pitch 9



Pitch 10



COMPUTER OPPONENT TEAM STATISTICS



MIRA	
CAPTAIN:	XENON
HEIGHT:	1.84m
WEIGHT:	80kg
STAMINA:	026
POWER:	100
SKILL	048



AURIGA	
CAPTAIN:	SIMION
HEIGHT:	2.23m
WEIGHT:	101kg
STAMINA:	028
POWER:	100
SKILL	071



CASTOR	
CAPTAIN:	SOHO
HEIGHT:	1.72m
WEIGHT:	89kg
STAMINA:	030
POWER:	100
SKILL	094



VOLANS	
CAPTAIN:	ARIECH
HEIGHT:	1.83m
WEIGHT:	72kg
STAMINA:	032
POWER:	100
SKILL	117

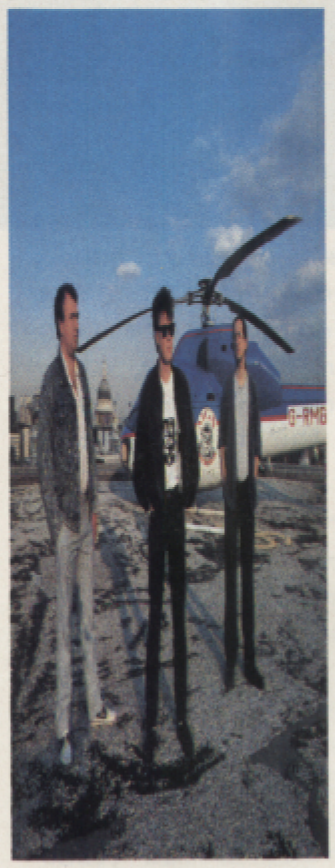


DORADO	
CAPTAIN:	ROONEY
HEIGHT:	2.01m
WEIGHT:	81kg
STAMINA:	034
POWER:	100
SKILL	140

LOOK AT THEM WHO CAN BLAME US?

The launch of Melbourne House's **Xenon** earlier this year marked the arrival of a new force in 16-bit software development. A talented trio of lads called The Bitmap Brothers. A sequel was expected but never appeared, quite simply because 'The Bros' didn't feel that the time was right. So how do you follow such a critically acclaimed product that's even had television exposure in Get Fresh?

While **Xenon** fever was at its greatest, the Bitmaps searched for inspiration. It came in the form of pinball machines, Tekhan's football simulation **World Cup** and a coin-op called **Dodgeball.** They decided they wanted to produce a soccer game mixed with American Football and a little shoot 'em up action – ultimately an aggressive football game. "We didn't want to do another vertically scrolling shoot 'em up, but we wanted to produce a simplistic arcade game which would be easy to pick up and play but



with an added level of strategy to sustain interest."

The result is **Speedball,** arguably a landmark in computer gaming. **Speedball's** greatest attraction is its immediate playability, and it comes as no surprise to learn that it took over three months to get the playability and player intelligence right.

"There were originally five goals with doors which closed when you scored. The first to score three goals was the winner, and in the event of a tie the goal launcher doors provided a fifth goal. We did have it so that the goalie could come out of his area, but it became too confusing and it was too easy to leave the goal wide open.

"We almost had players dropping dead and being dragged off the pitch when energy levels ran out. We also had a 'shelf' for ball to roll around, a bit like **Real Tennis,** but it didn't really work either. Actually, there's a hidden level of **Xenon** which was never used. We thought it'd be a bit of a laugh to include it here . . . Our next project? Who knows? We need to play some more pinball . . ."



VELA	
CAPTAIN:	TYCHO
HEIGHT:	2.21m
WEIGHT:	112kg
STAMINA:	036
POWER:	200
SKILL	163



TUCANA	
CAPTAIN:	BROD
HEIGHT:	1.74m
WEIGHT:	80kg
STAMINA:	038
POWER:	200
SKILL	186



ANTLIA	
CAPTAIN:	ZEIT
HEIGHT:	1.84m
WEIGHT:	70kg
STAMINA:	040
POWER:	200
SKILL	209



PAVO	
CAPTAIN:	RUBYCON
HEIGHT:	1.82m
WEIGHT:	88kg
STAMINA:	042
POWER:	200
SKILL	232



PERSEUS	
CAPTAIN:	KEPLER
HEIGHT:	2.42m
WEIGHT:	132kg
STAMINA:	044
POWER:	200
SKILL	254

ELITE

Firebird

Thanks to B Deny of Basildon in Essex, the official Elite cheat mode can now be printed. When asked for the code word from the manual, type SARA. Now type in the correct word when prompted and begin play. Press the '*' key to access the hacker screen, where bytes and variables can be changed to suit.

CHANGE BYTE	FOR
32 to 01	Cloaking Device
31 to 01	ECM Jammer
20 to 01	Escape Capsule
23 to 01	Energy Bomb
24 to 01	Energy Unit
26 to 01	Docking Computer
28 to 01	Galactic Hyperdrive
80 to 01	Document
84 to 01	Fugitive Rating
85 to 01	Offender Rating
88 to 01	Mostly Harmless Rating
88 to 01-08	Poor – Elite Rating
1F – 01	Fuel Scoop
34 – 03	Cargo Hold
7C – 01	Unhappy Refugees

Pressing ESCAPE gets you back to the game.

INTERNATIONAL KARATE +

System 3

The attract sequence hints at the fact that there are some other codes... so here are a few for you to type in while playing.

FREZ completely freezes the game, which is useful if you want to take screenshots.

PAC causes the little yellow ball character to gobble his way across the screen.

FISH makes a fish leap out of the water.

Type BIRD to see a bird fly across the screen.

PERI causes a periscope to peek out of the water.

Typing in one of two words bearing a similarity to FORK and CONT (especially when spoken in a Northern-sounding accent) results in an interesting message appearing on screen.

Finally, type in any of the following to see some messages from Archer to his chums...

ANBK	ANGL
EDHK	FOOK
GLZP	GPZP
SHAH	SIMR
STEW	SUNL
TOTO	

STARGLIDER

Rainbird

Slow down to minimum speed and select F for fixed gunsights. Pause the game and type JS ARG S followed by RETURN, then type JS ARG S and hit RETURN again. Now pressing M stops all the enemies in their tracks will P awards an extra missile. Points freaks will be glad to hear that N gives an extra 5,000 to your score.

OUT RUN

US Gold

Here's a much requested golden oldie... During play hold down the keys STARION (which 8-bit owners may remember was the title of a flaky Elite clone from Melbourne House) to activate the cheat mode. Now you can press:

- B for extended play.
- Q gives information about the game.
- T gives a ten second time bonus
- D saves the screen as a Degas picture
- S cycles through the various locations
- X crashes the program (?)

CARRIER COMMAND

Rainbird

Following last month's ST invulnerability cheat, David Nicol of Heworth in York has leapt to the rescue of those having trouble with the Amiga version. Pause the game with the mouse button and then type THE BEST IS YET TO BE (including spaces) followed by a press of the '+' key. Invincible Mantas are now at your disposal.

MENACE

Psygnosis

Start the game, type in XR3I TURBO NUTTER BASTARD (the programmer must be a Harry Enfield fan) and then hit keys 1-6 to select the level you want to play. Furthermore, pressing RETURN now bestows you with some much needed extra weaponry! David Nicol of York is once again the man to thank for that gemlette..

MICKEY MOUSE

Gremlin

While playing, type in 61315688. A flickering line should appear in the border, indicating that the cheat mode is in operation. The following keys will now activate these handy features...

- F2 Opens the door to the next sub-game
- F3 Starts a fight between you and a witch
- F4 Refills your water pistol

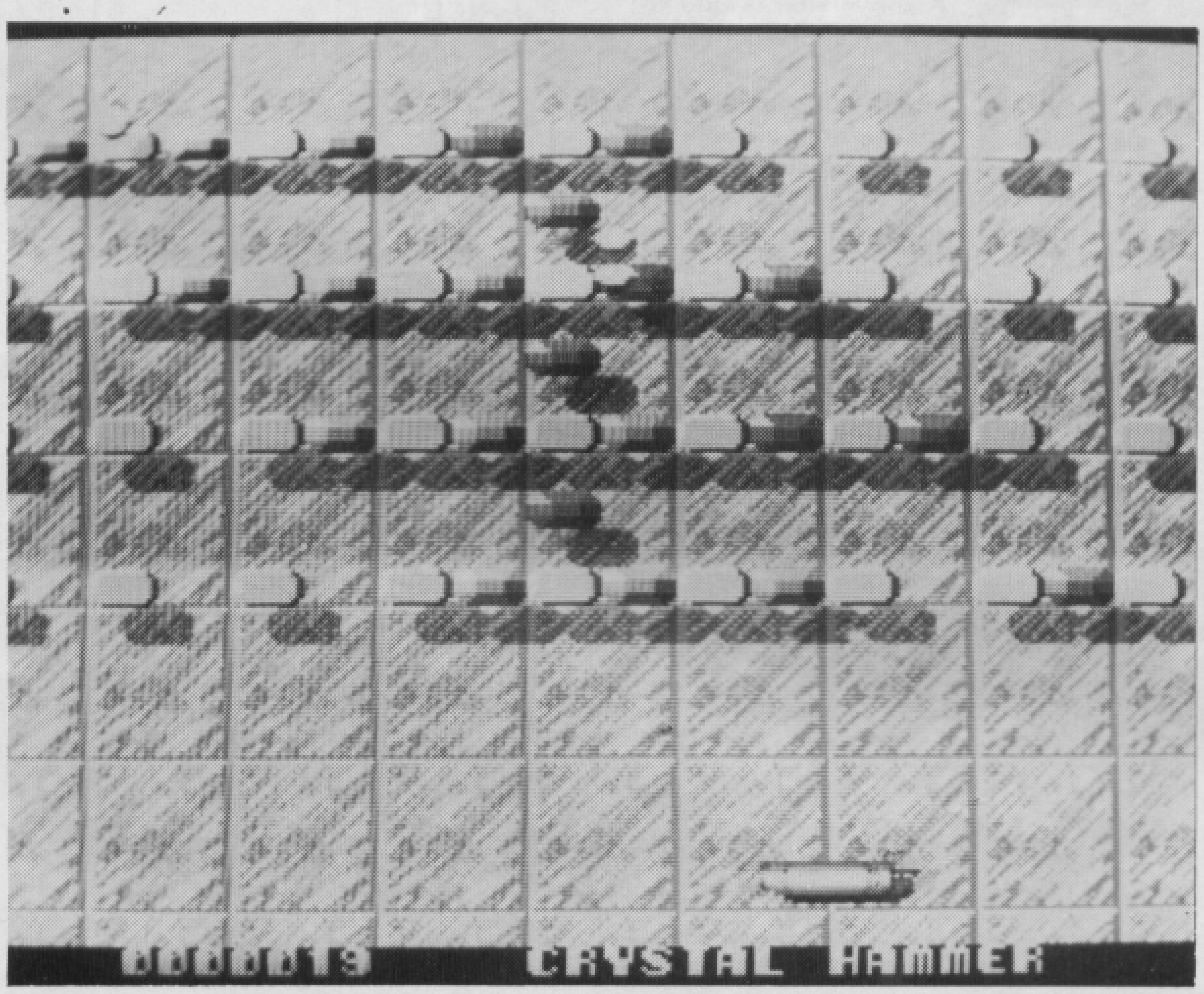
TIPS

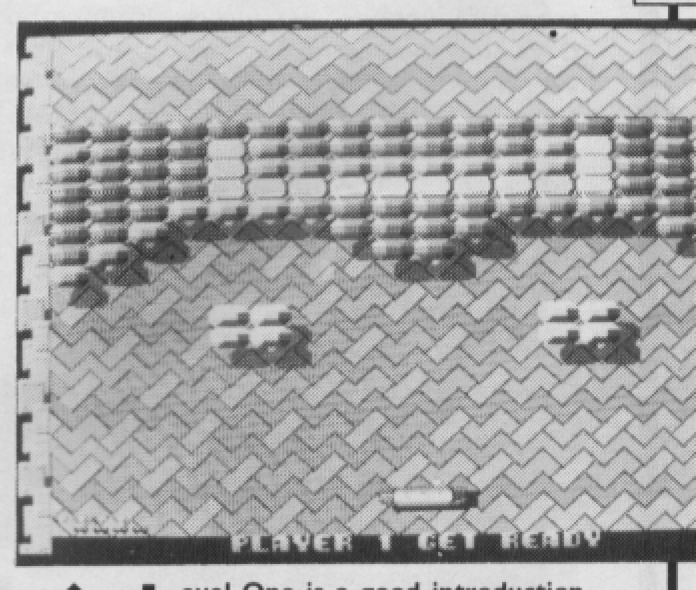
Crystal Hammer

Just when Gary Whitta thought it was safe to go back to his Amiga, along comes new software house Axxiom with their contribution to the seemingly endless line of Arkanoid clones.

Crack, **Impact**, **Giganoid**, **Revenge Of Doh** and **Super Breakout** are just five notable members of that overweight genre, the **Arkanoid** clone. The reason why so many of these games have been released over the last year or so seems to be because programmers find them extremely easy to write. It also gives graphic designers an opportunity to show off their creations on the mural-like backdrops invariably found in games of this ilk. Arguably, this type of game is proving less and less entertaining, with little innovation or variation from game to game.

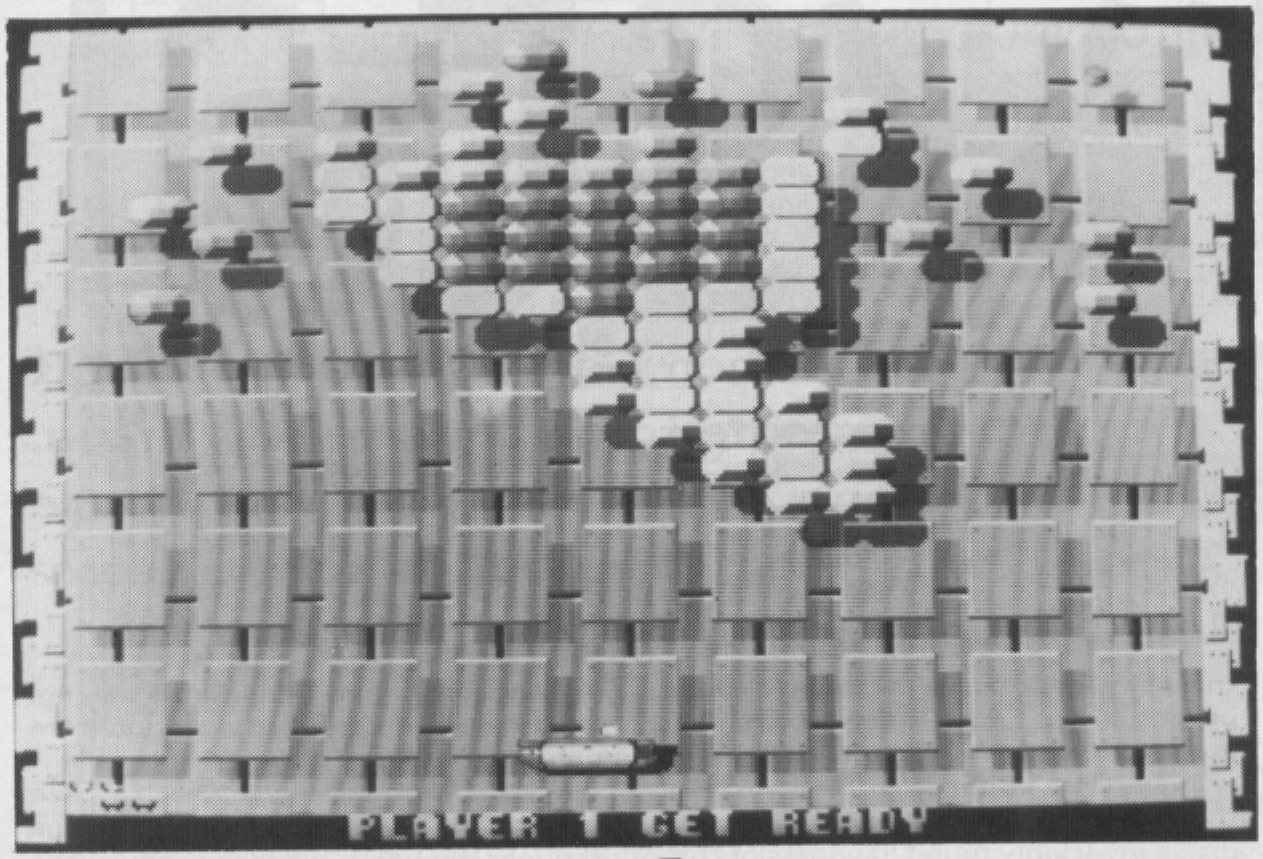
Crystal Hammer is yet another case of bats and bricks and balls. This time though, the bat is a space capsule, the ball is a magical orb and the bricks are coloured crystals. There are 30 screens in total, each consisting of an array of floating crystals, various aliens and of course the ubiquitous habitat-style



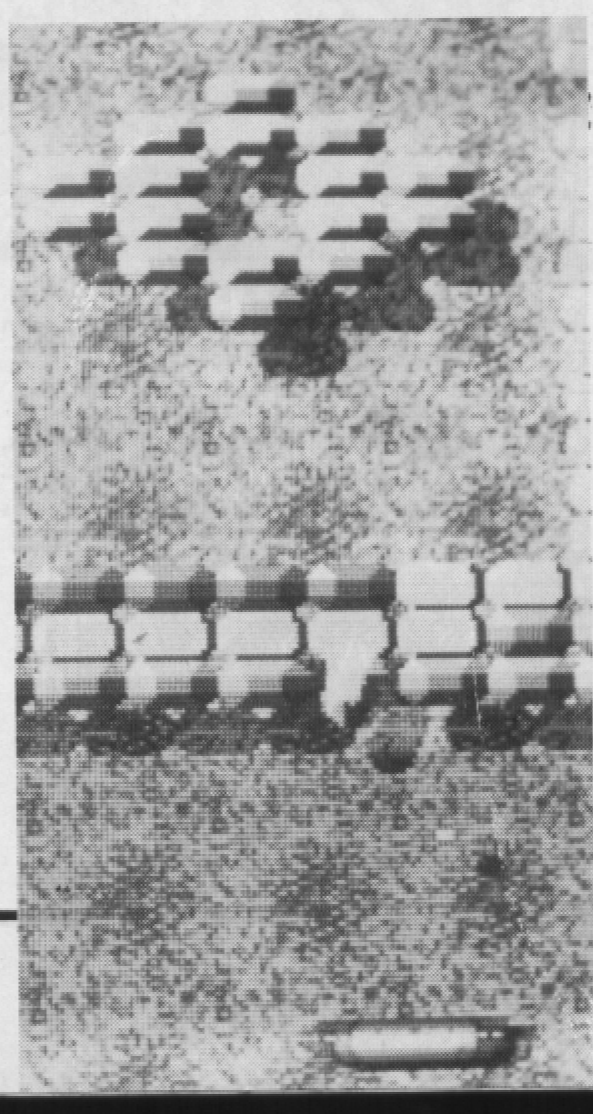


▲ Level One is a good introduction, as every type of power icon appears before the screen is cleared.

◄ Further into the proceedings, things get a little more difficult – for example every second block on this level is unbreakable.



Jackson Pollock mural of a backdrop. Completing the screen is achieved by knocking out all the crystals with the ball, and as usual different colours of crystals indicate different things. Some take more than one hit to destroy while others are simply invincible. Occasionally crystals flash and fall when hit, bestowing special powers on the bat when caught. Some crystals stretch the size of the bat and slow down the ball, while others have more exotic effects such as splitting the ball in three, endowing the bat with a laser weapon and awarding extra lives.

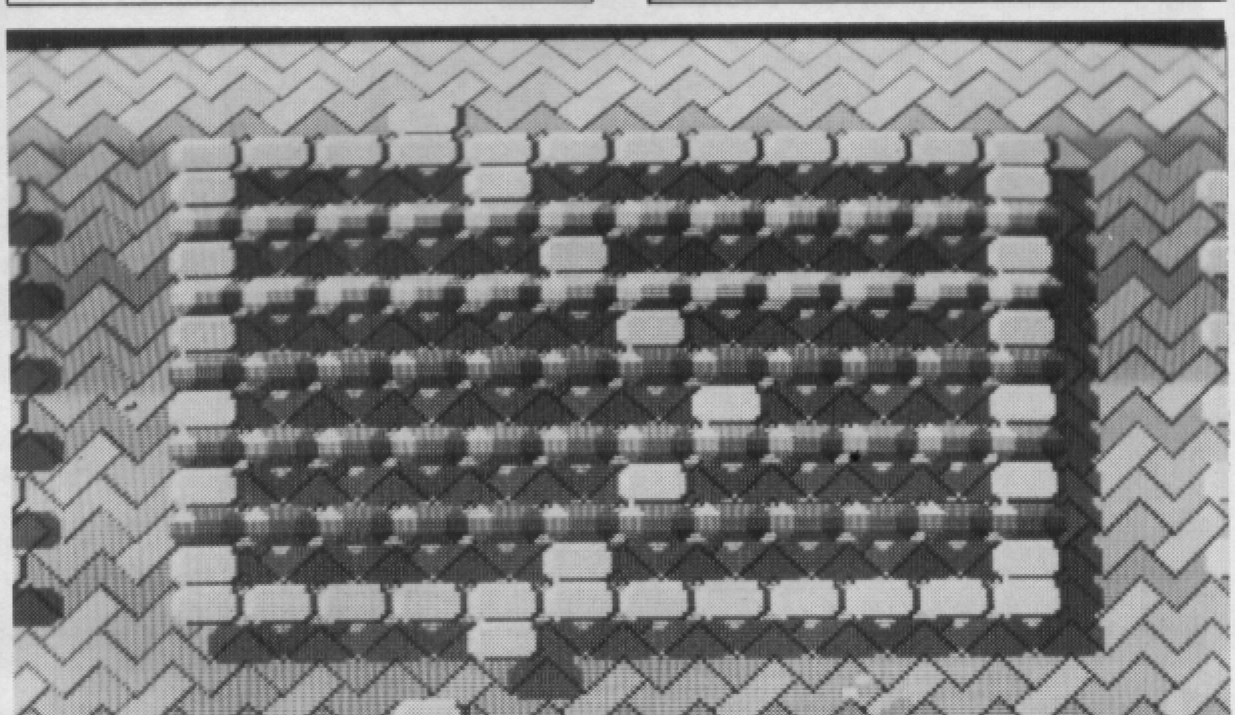


ST A conversion is due to see the light of day early next year at the latest. It's coming from the German authors of the original, reLine, alghough it's unlikely to top Imagine's original conversion of Arkanoid which was released at the same price almost two years ago.

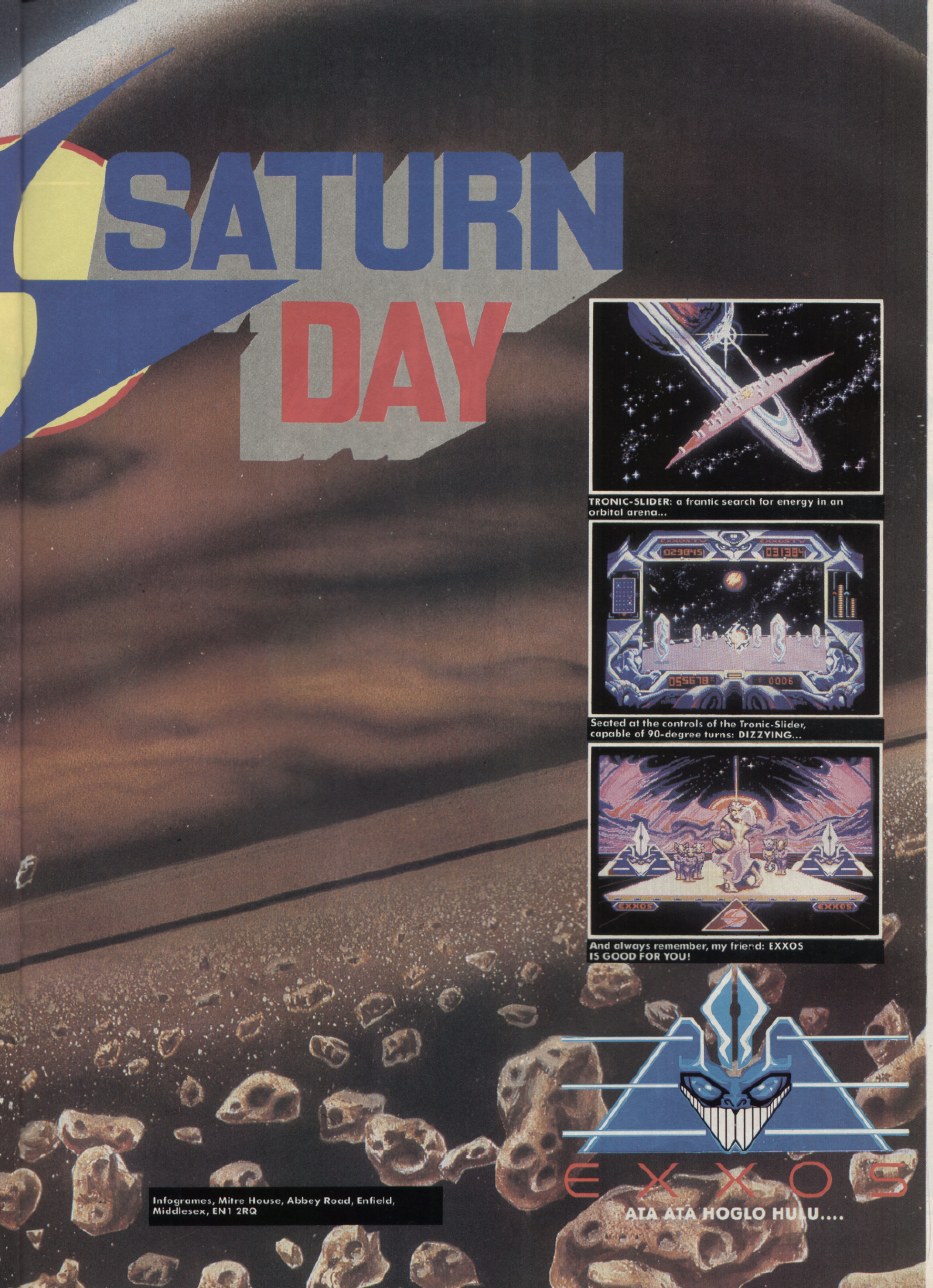
A There's no doubt that Crystal Hammer is an uninspired product. It doesn't exactly offer anything new, and doesn't even stand out from the crowd as far as Arkanoid games are concerned. The spinning crystals are pleasant enough, but the backdrops are not particularly special and the sound effects are far from memorable. The whole thing is slow-paced when compared to Discovery's conversion of Arkanoid, and despite the generally addictive nature of this type of game, the urge to play for any great length of time isn't overwhelming. If you still don't have an Arkanoid game in your collection, either go for Discovery's original (which has now been updated and features 66 levels) or the cheaper but just as impressive Giganoid which features meaty sound and sampled speech among other things.

PRICE	£14.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	40%
SOUND	44%
PLAYABILITY	60%
VALUE	54%
OVERALL	56%

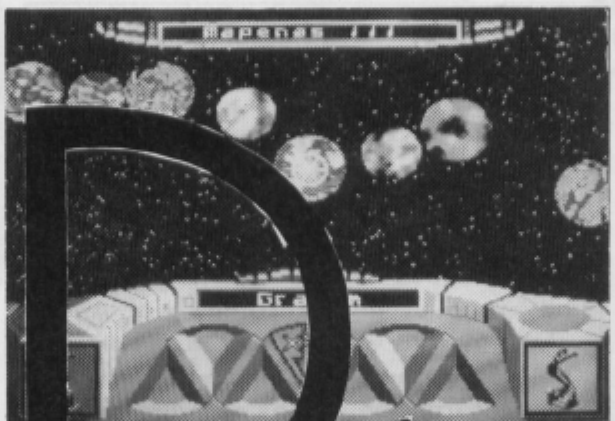
OVERALL 41%

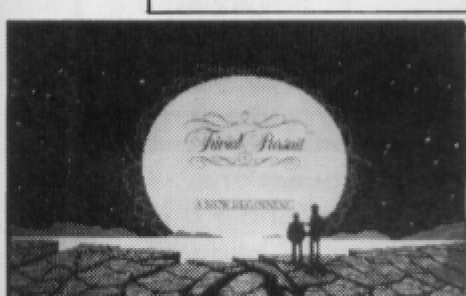



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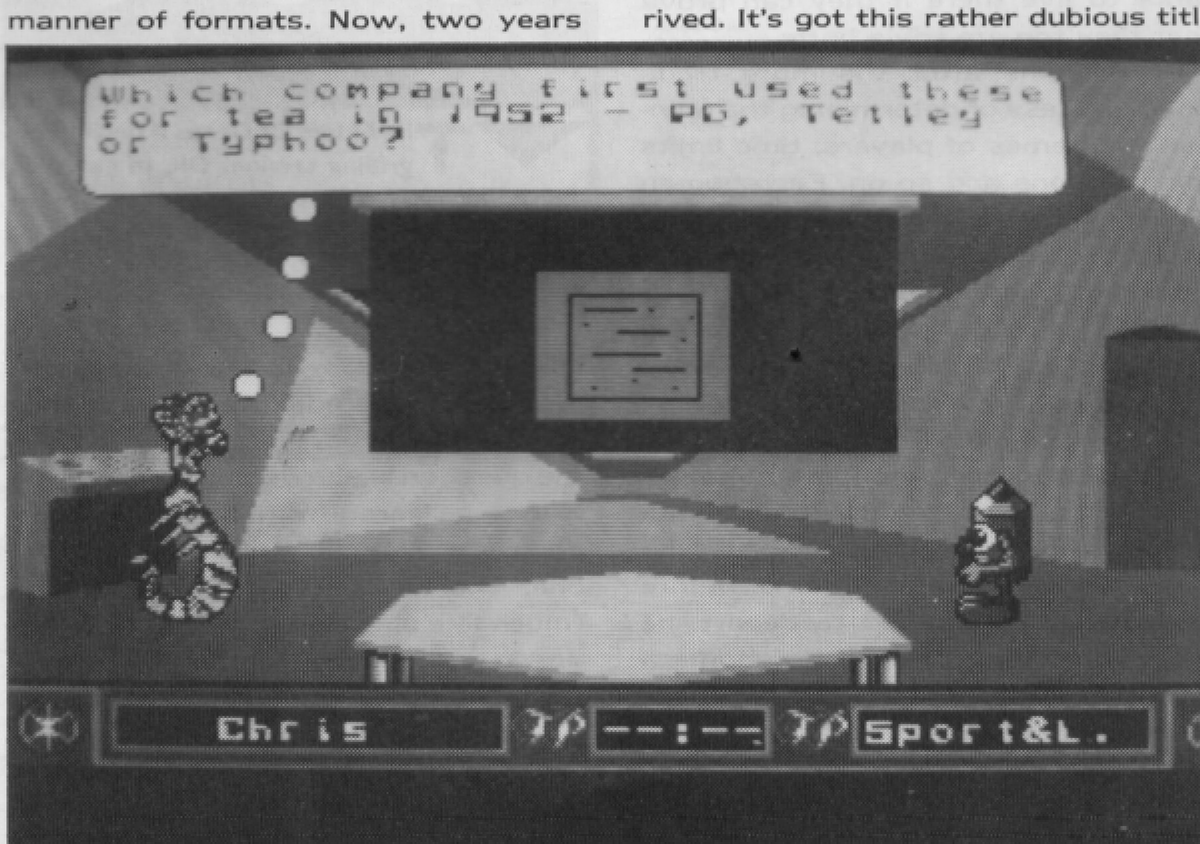
Trivial Pursuit: A New Beginning

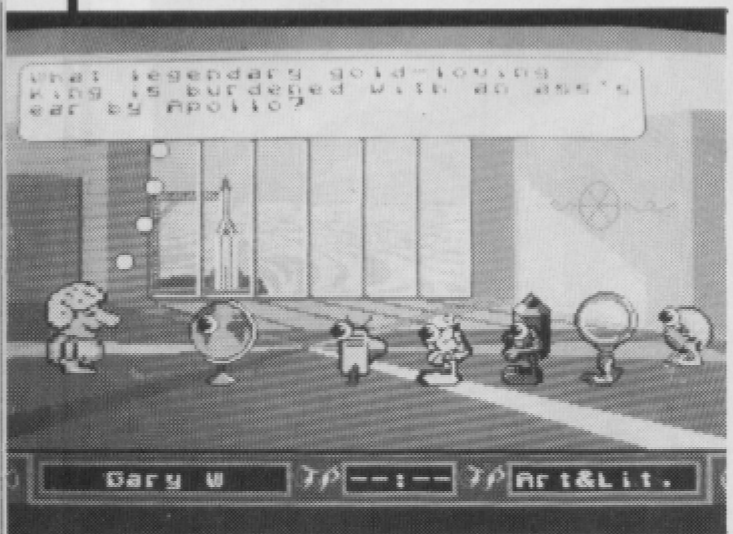




Horn Abbot's best-selling board game has been given a new lease of life thanks to Domark's latest release. Or has it? Gary Whitta takes a look at the odd mix of adventure and knowledge and finds that the two don't mix at all well...

Everybody loves Trivial Pursuit, right! The board game is one of the biggest selling of all time, and Domark's computer game did immensely well across all manner of formats. Now, two years after the appearance of the original binary interpretation (and all its subsequent add-ons such as Genus II, the Young Players Edition and Baby Boomer question packs), the second official Trivial Pursuit game has arrived. It's got this rather dubious title





Yes, it's everybody's favourite quizmaster with the poorly fitting wig, Bob Monkh...er, TP. Answer the question correctly or get to the back of the queue and wait your turn.

because Domark completely scrapped the idea of a board and plastic pieces and started all over again to create an original approach to trivial time-passing.

An outlandish scenario has been provided to accompany this new incarnation. The year is 2045 AD, and the Earth is a dying planet. A group of freinds have decided to make a run for it before the planet snuffs it, and have built a space rocket which could take them to the lush planet Genus II. Corny enough for you so far? Here's the good bit. The inhabitants of Genus II are all trivia fanatics and only allow immigrants to live there if they can prove that they too are trivia buffs.

Play begins after the more traditional process of determining the number and names of players, time limits for questions and so on. Each human player is represented by a surreal object, such as a bouncing globe, a shuffling magnifying glass or a crayon(!). The game begins in a depature lounge, with space rockets waiting outside. Players shuffle in one by one to be greeted by the flight controller, none other than everybody's favourite quizmaster, TP, the diminutive master of ceremonies who appeared in the original game. Before each player is allowed to depart, he must correctly answer a question – a wrong answer sends him straight back to the end of the queue.

Take off presents a view of space from the ship's cockpit. There are six galaxies to explore, each with its own planetary system. Any planet can be selected, and doing so beams the player (*Star Trek* style) down onto the selected planet. On each there is an alien quizmaster with a question which must be answered correctly to ensure that the players don't lose their turn. If the question is answered correctly, the planet is cleared from the galaxy map and the player can move onto another one. The idea is to find six objects (much like six wedges in the original), one in each galaxy, so the play can fly to Genus II.

When all six pieces have been collected, the player flies to Genus II where the committee of six elders interviews him in a plush courtroom. Any of the six elders can be selected, and each has a question on a different subject. One of these questions is known as the Ace Question, and if this is answered, the player is allowed entry to Genus II and the game is won. However, no indication or clue is given as to who has this question, and so the player takes pot luck. Answering a question correctly forces one of the elders to leave the room, thereby shortening the odds of finding the Ace Question.

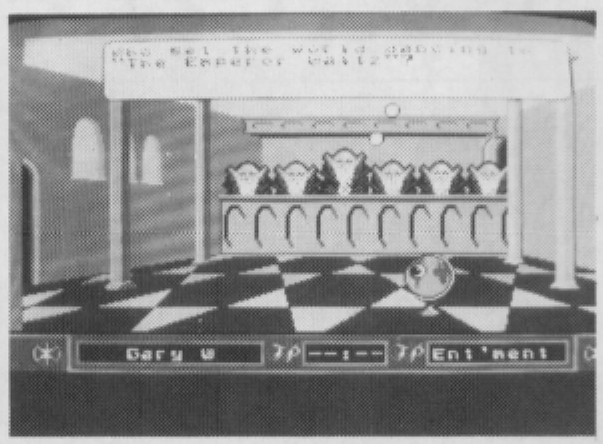
ST

ST owners can expect to see a version very similar (almost the same in fact) to the Amiga version reviewed opposite. The questions will be the same, with the only differences likely to be minor aesthetic ones. As such the ST version shares the same faults as its Amiga stablemate.

RELEASE DATE	Out Now
PRICE	£19.95



A pictorial question. Zaire, Zambia and... what's the other one?



The Elders Of Genus II begin their grilling session. Oh, in case you didn't know, the answer is Strauss.

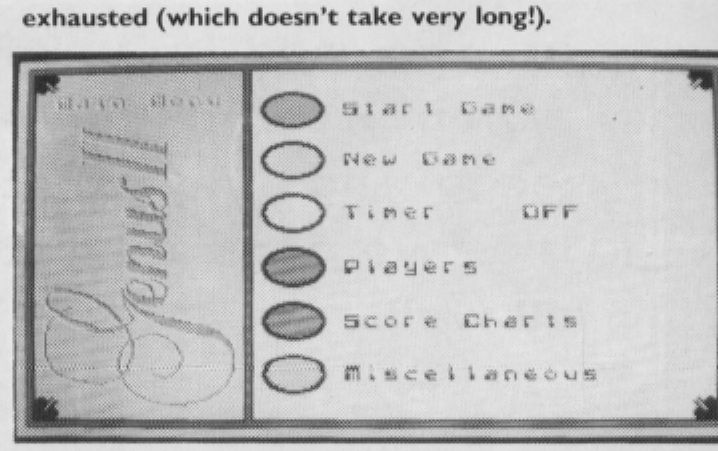
A

The original computer version of Trivial Pursuit was great, but this sequel falls way short of the mark. Scrapping the board and attempting to come up with a completely fresh approach was a good idea – but the new space adventure scenario certainly isn't. Any strategy that was present in the original board game isn't apparent in this new incarnation, and as such the game is little more than a long string of trivia questions. The set pieces such as beaming down to different planets soon prove repetitive and boring, and the picture and sound questions are feeble, consisting of monotone renditions of classical music and simplistic line drawings. Trivial Pursuit: A New Beginning is only worth considering if you have plenty of friends or relations to play it with (and even then the relatively small bank of questions soon runs out).

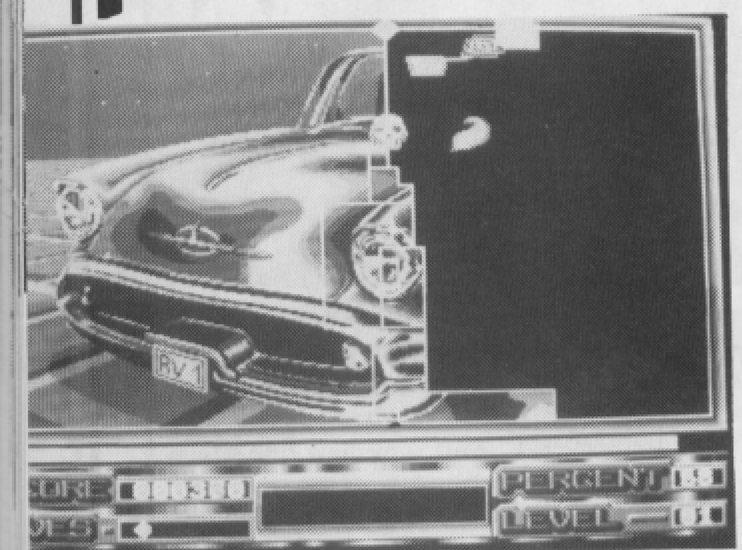
PRICE:	£19.95
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	31%
SOUND	28%
VALUE	22%
PLAYABILITY	42%

OVERALL 39%

At least Trivial Pursuit is user friendly. Players can enter and leave the game at any time and new questions can be loaded in once one set has been exhausted (which doesn't take very long!).



Powerstyx



Who remembers the Atari coin-op Qix? Newcomer Axxiom does, and has released a 16-bit pictorial tribute to this ageing arcade classic. Gary Whitta goes exploring.

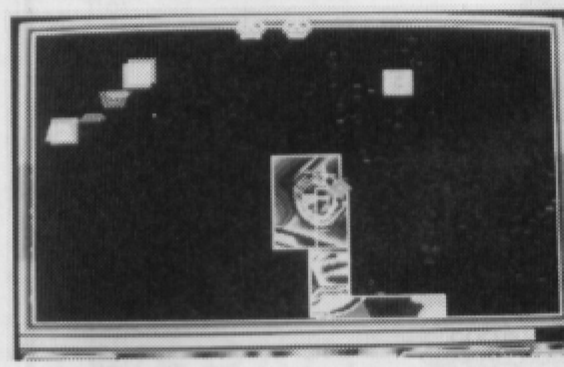
Very few people seem to remember Qix today, which is a real shame. Worse still, clones of the ancient Atari coin-op are few and far between – the only one that springs to mind being Firebird's **Zolyx** (which sadly only ever appeared on 8-bit). The concept is simple; patrol a series of screens sealing off areas to reveal a hidden picture.

At the outset, each screen is simply an empty black rectangle, with the orb moved around the outside border at will. The orb can also move freely within the blank area, leaving behind a line tracing its path. When the orb returns to the outer border, and a completed polygon is drawn by the orb's pathline, that area is removed to reveal part of the artwork hiding behind it. In turn the outline of that new shape becomes part of the border, so extra shapes can be joined onto it to increase the filled area. When at least 75% of the picture is filled, the entire picture is revealed and the next level accessed.

To make things harder, a menagerie of alien nasties patrols each screen. These come in two specific types, those that live inside the screen, and those that patrol the border. If the orb inadvertently collides with a marauding nasty, a life is lost. The same thing happens if the snake-like alien within the picture itself hits the orb's pathline while it is drawing.

The player is, however able to fight back in a number of ways. Firstly he can box in his border-patrolling enemies by drawing around them. The orb can also box in various 'friendly' icons that appear from time to time to gain points, extra powers or time extensions.

ST owning Qix fans will be pleased to hear that Powerstyx is currently under conversion. It's being written by the authors of the original Amiga version and should be ready for release in February next year.



Although Powerstyx is little more than a throwback to the early days of gaming tarted up by some pretty static graphics and digitised sound, it still manages to be enjoyable to play. The incentive to complete each screen is enhanced by hi-res artwork and a thumping good heavy rock guitar soundtrack (that is unfortunately short) plays away in the background to add to the enjoyment. Recommending it, however is difficult. The Amiga afficionado who likes to see his computer put to work, producing mind-blowing 3D animation and startling sound (eg: Starglider II) won't be impressed by Powerstyx, but arcade addicts who recognise and appreciate a classic game concept when they see one shouldn't let this pass them by.

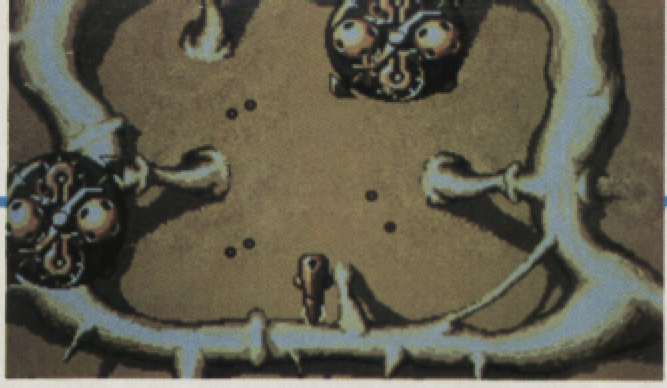
PRICE:	£14.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	39%
SOUND	30%
VALUE	51%
PLAYABILITY	56%

OVERALL 52%






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Phantom Fighter



Recently-formed Irish development house Emerald Software is the force behind Martech's progressive shoot 'em up. Ageing English games-player Gary Penn is the man with his finger on the fire button.



The missile-spewing alien found at the conclusion of the cavernous confines of the first level.

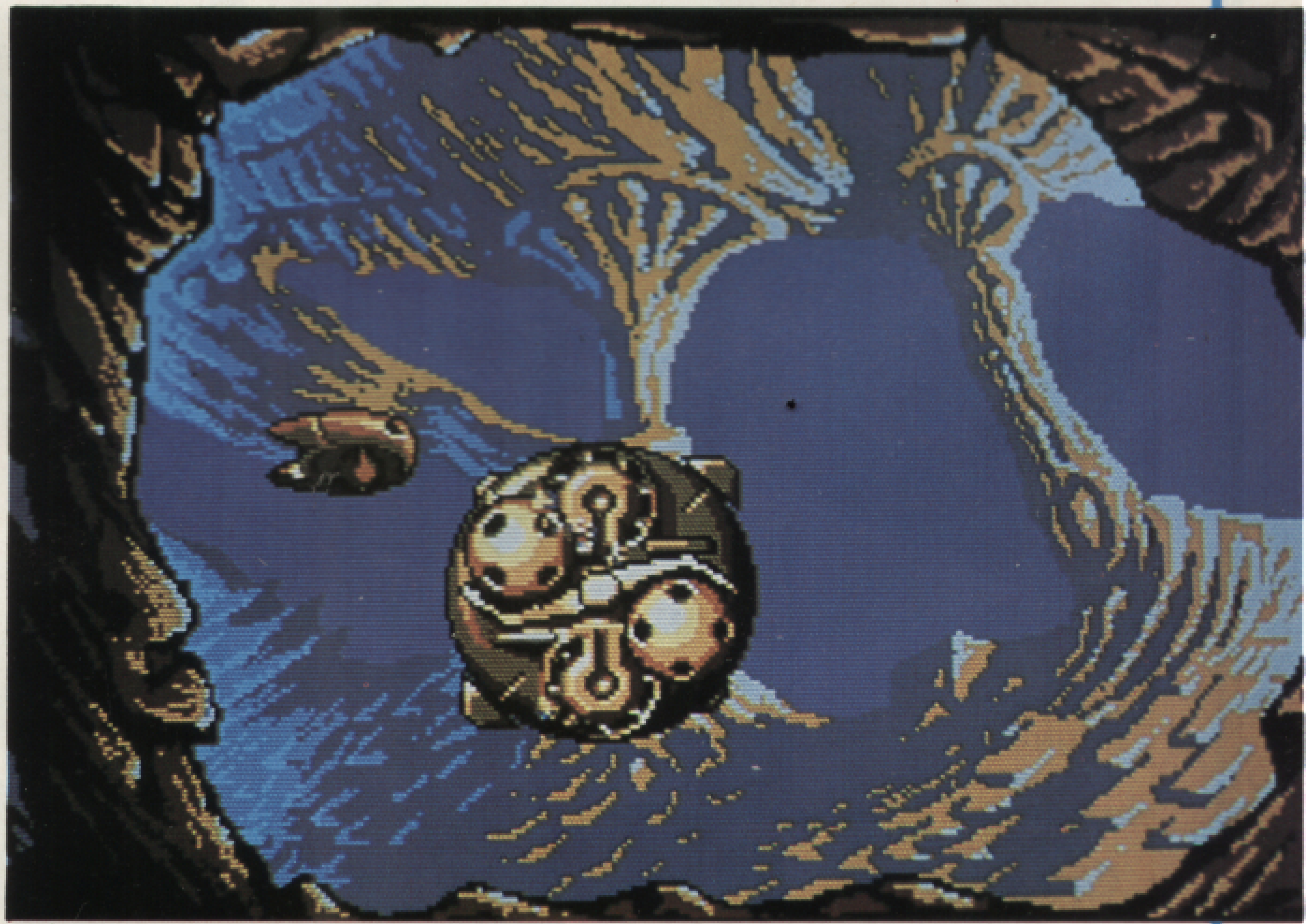
Shoot 'em ups in which you improve your firepower as you progress have been knocking aorund the arcades for years, but only recently has the genre of the progressive shoot 'em up become used frequently, seemingly prompted by the appearance and subsequent licensing of **R-Type**.

Konami's **Nemesis** and its sequel, **Salamander**, were arguably the first games of their type, with the latter employing two types of scrolling action – primarily horizontal but with a vertical scrolling element thrown in for good measure.

The five levels of Emerald's debut product, **Phantom Fighter**, are presented in a similar fashion: the first, third and fifth levels scroll horizontally from right to left, while levels two and four move in the vertical Terra Cresta mould.

Bomb-spitting aliens attack in a variety of patterns, more often than not in an infuriatingly addictive and unpredictable manner. Some enemy craft are bigger than others, and some require more than one hit to destroy them. And in the best tradition of scrolling shoot 'em ups, there's a large alien to dispose of at the end of each level.

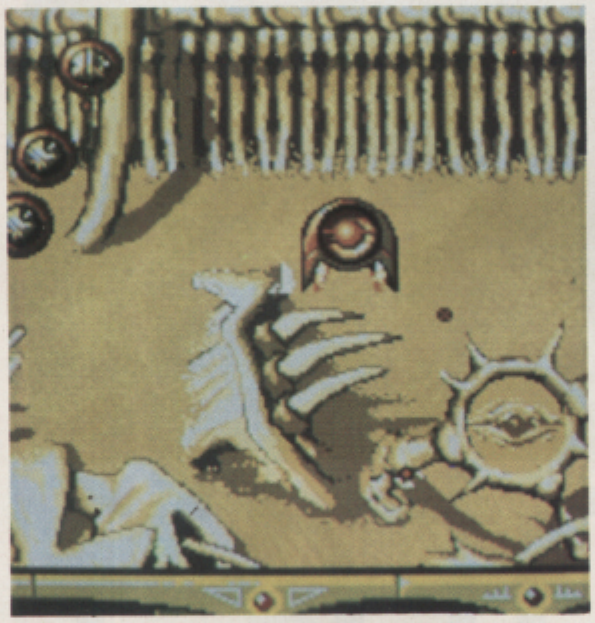
On the extra weapons front there's plenty to keep itchy fingers happy, with tokens appearing when certain groups of aliens are eradicated. Like Capcom's **Side Arms** or Psyclapse's **Menace**, The type of feature conveyed depends on the letter shown on the token – this letter changes as the



token is shot.

The array of weaponry includes a faster fire rate, more powerful shots, a spray of bullets, side lasers and homing missiles which spin around the ship, shooting off and homing in on alien lifeforms with a press of the fire button.

The dinosaur graveyard of the vertically scrolling Level Two.





Level Three, complete with grasping animated tendrils protruding from holey mounds, and this strange creature at the end.

EMERALD JEWELS

Based in Waterford, and part funded by the Irish government, Emerald Software is currently working on the ST, Amiga and PC conversions of two coin-ops: The Deep for US Gold and Irem's Vigilante. A third title, Grandslam's Running Man completes the list of work in progress. Formed in March of this year by David Martin and John Barry, directors of Brighton-based Software Communications, the company set out to take advantage of the fact that most Irish programmers have to leave the country to find work. Martin and Barry felt that by forming an Irish-based company, they would be able to keep a strong creative force together – and with a little help from the Irish Government's Industrial Development Authority they were proved right. The negotiations with the IDA took a year to complete, as the body had been through a bad experience with Atari some years back and didn't want a repetition of those problems. The team consists of 23 people: five graphic artists, 17 programmers (four PC, four ST and Amiga and the rest 8-bit – but who want to move up another eight bits) and one administrator. The sonics are handled by some of the more musically minded programmers. Interestingly, the Amiga is used as the 'lead' machine, with product being first developed on that machine and later transferred to the PC and ST.

A The key to any shoot 'em up is the 'feel' – and Phantom Fighter feels terrific. The ship responds quickly and realistically, the alien attack waves move in increasingly cunning formations and the extra weapons are perfectly suited to the tasks that they need to perform. For example, homing missiles work effectively against some of the initial ships, but they become a liability when used against the end of level monstrosities. The backgrounds are either stylised or bland, depending on your taste, and the music and sound effects complement the action. The only major flaw is the length of the levels. When the action is this engrossing it's a bit disappointing to find that you've reached the end of a level so quickly. Still, what there is is entertaining. A commendable debut from Emerald.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Early December
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	84%
PLAYABILITY	86%
VALUE	71%

OVERALL 80%

This unpleasant lava-spewing creature resides at the end of Level Four, complete with superbly animated lava flowing around detailed rock.

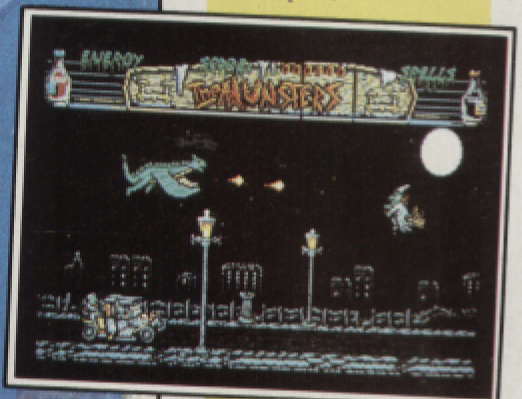


ST Martech's original blurb included the now infamous 'sorry ST owners, but your machine couldn't handle the graphics' statement. This was because the Amiga programmer felt that an ST version wouldn't do the game justice. On the other hand, the PC programmer is itching to give it a go, so a conversion may still be on the cards. We'll keep you posted.

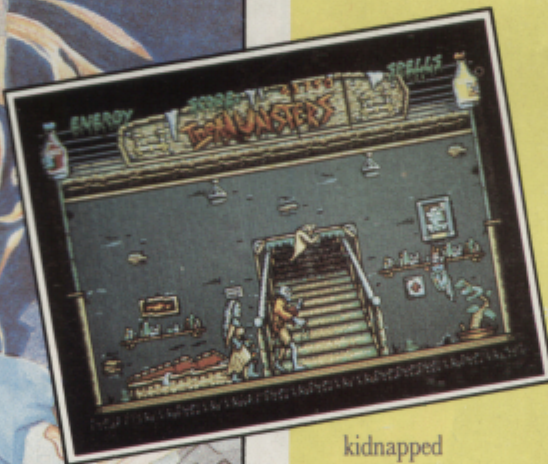
PC Emerald is currently beavering away on CGA and EGA versions in time for a release date early next year. Unusually, a TGA version (Tandy Graphics Adaptor) is also under development – presumably with one eye on the American market, as the Tandy format is practically unknown on these shores.



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Makes your blood run cold doesn't it? Because the munsters are such nice guys Old Nick has decided to teach them a lesson in "ghoulology" and bring them back to the underworld. To this end they have



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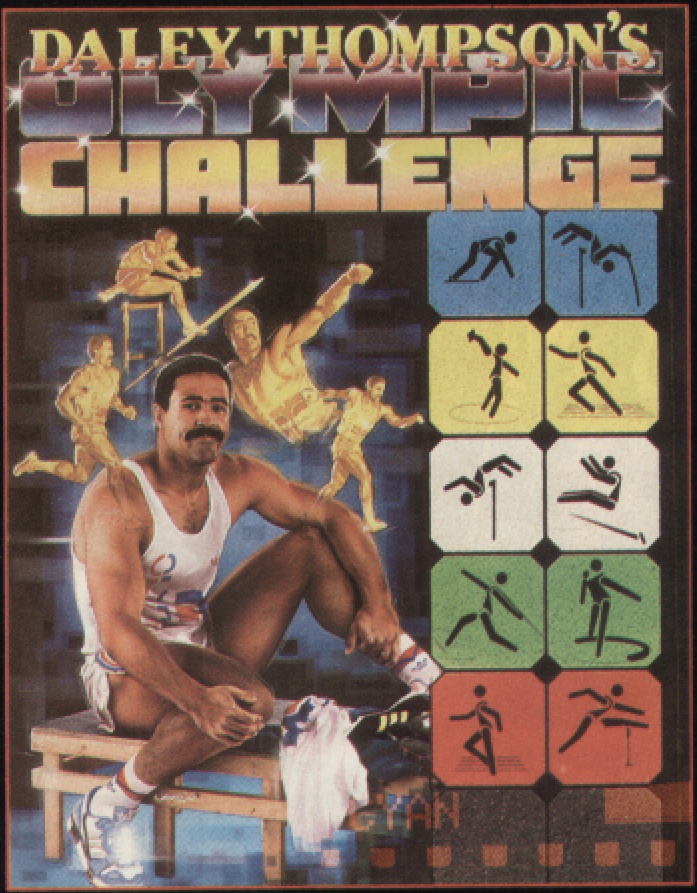
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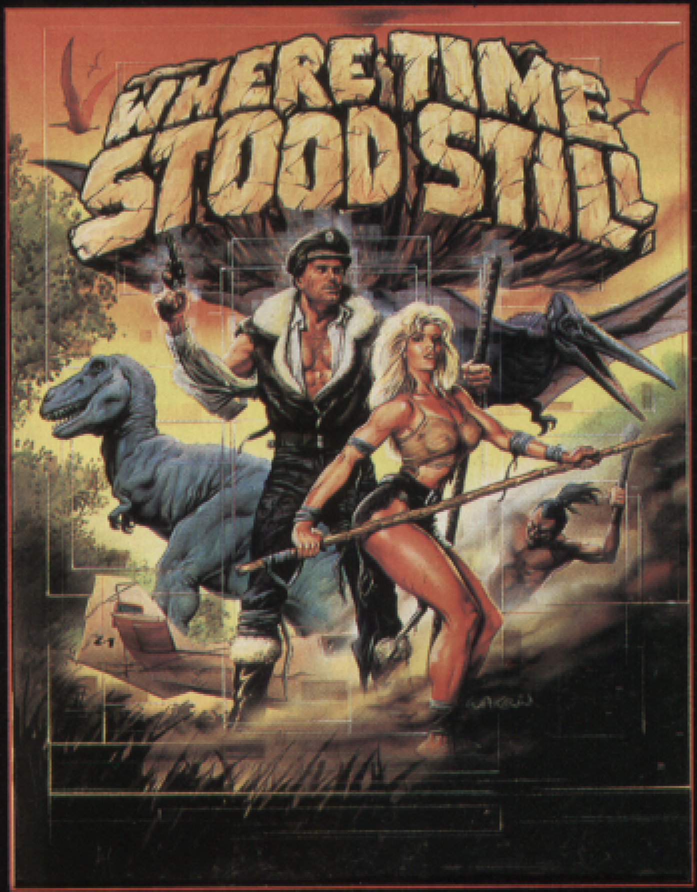
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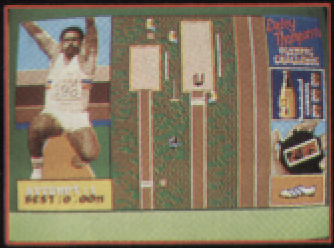






Ten Olympic events include Long Jump, Shotput, High Jump, 100m Sprint, 400m, 110m Hurdles, Discus, Pole Vault, Javelin and 1500m. You will need all your skills to build on what you hope was, an impressive workout, and, as is necessary for all top flight athletes, your judgement to select the most effective equipment for each event is now vital – a decision which can win or lose you a place on the podium. This isn't just another sports simulation, this is a Daley Thompson 'event' where all his talent and humour burst through to make a thrilling and entertaining game play for all the family. Go for the Olympic Challenge!





FROM ocean

Your plane has ditched on a mountainous plateau somewhere in deepest Tibet. You and your companions are alive. A large shape moves toward you, you rub your eyes in disbelief; a Dinosaur! – where are you ... and when? Stunning, monochromatic 3D graphics and 4 way scrolling, give that '50's cinema mood as you learn not only to survive, but also that your companions are not all they first seemed!





FROM ocean

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the coin-op smash
now for your home
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level, vertically
scrolling arcade
thriller throws you
deep into the jungl
and ruined cities of
nation held in the g
of a cruel oppresso
Freedom is your air
. . . Guerrilla War is
the means!

16 BIT STATE

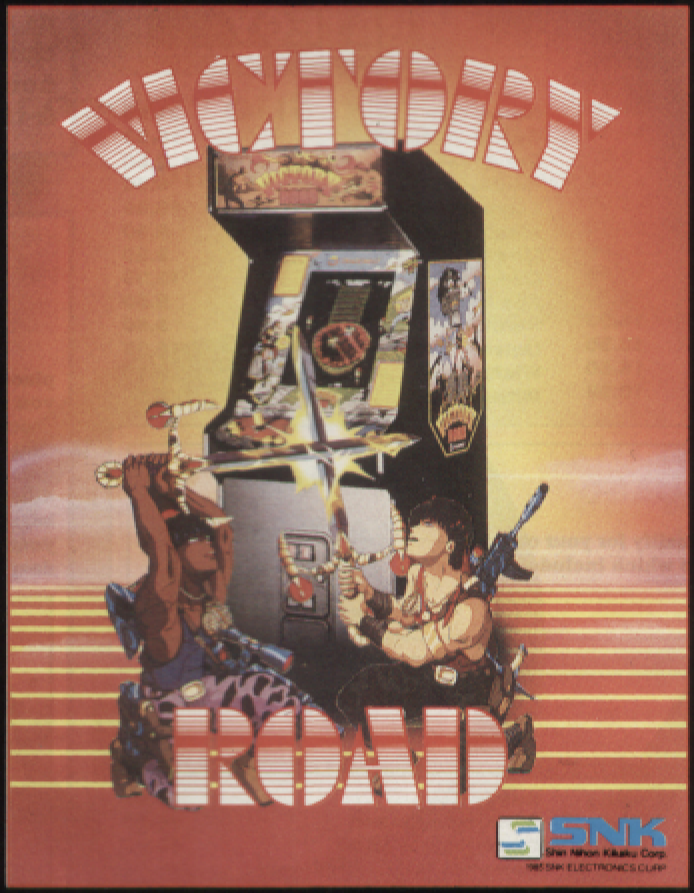
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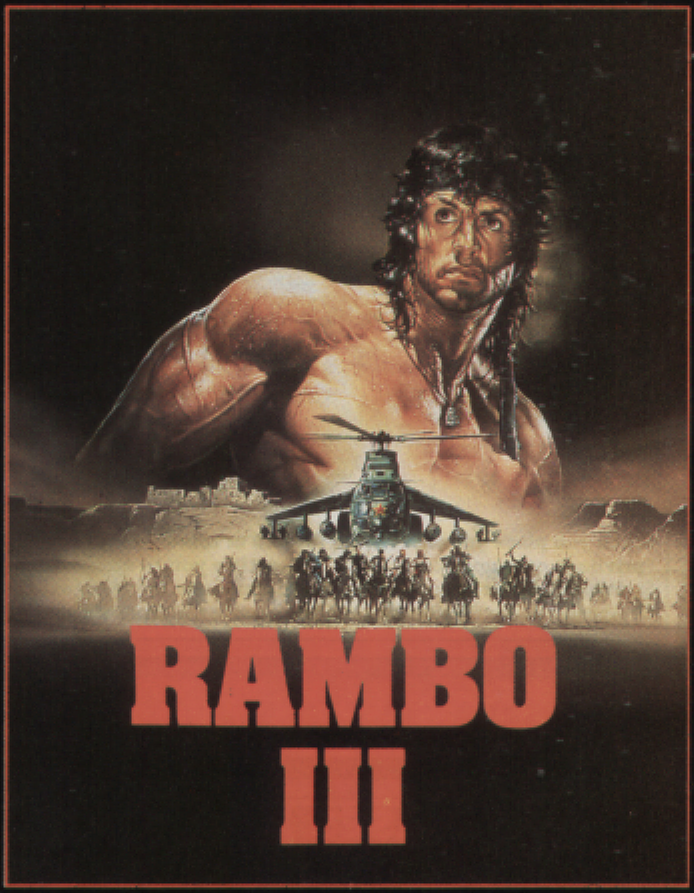


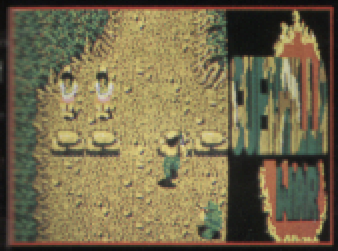
ATARI ST £19.95

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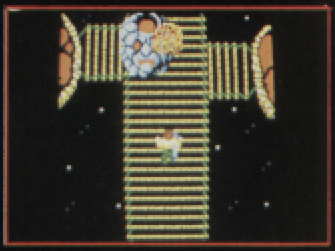


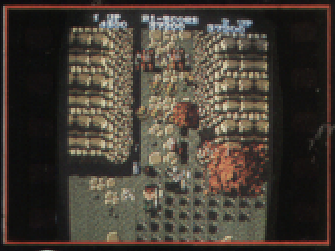




This is where the fun really begins. You will meet vampires, two and three headed monsters – the head will fly at you on its own, just when you think you are gaining the upper hand. Trapdoors and elevators transport you – sometimes to your surprise – inside ancient buildings and under lakes and oceans. Build up the firepower necessary to fight off your aggressors. Action and excitement all the way with this macabre and unusual game; which has that elusive extra something to keep you coming back for more.

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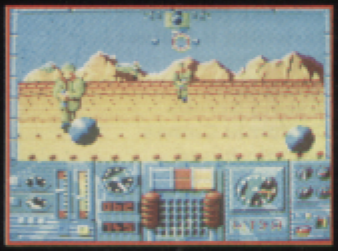




He's back and this time he's taking no prisoners. Colonel Trautman has been captured by the Russians in Afghanistan and there is only one person capable of freeing him. Negotiate the minefields, explore the Russian camp, lay boobytraps, avoid detection, free the Colonel and then ... move on to the explosive climax!

RAMBO IS BACK!

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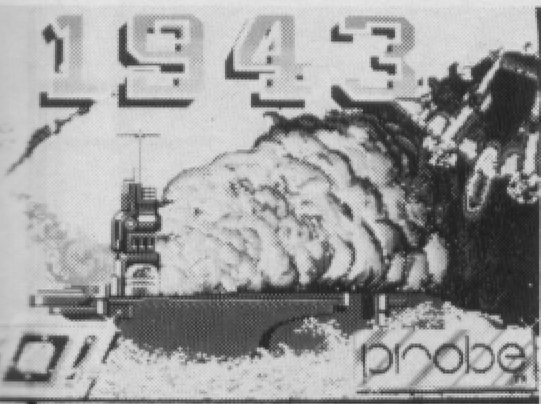
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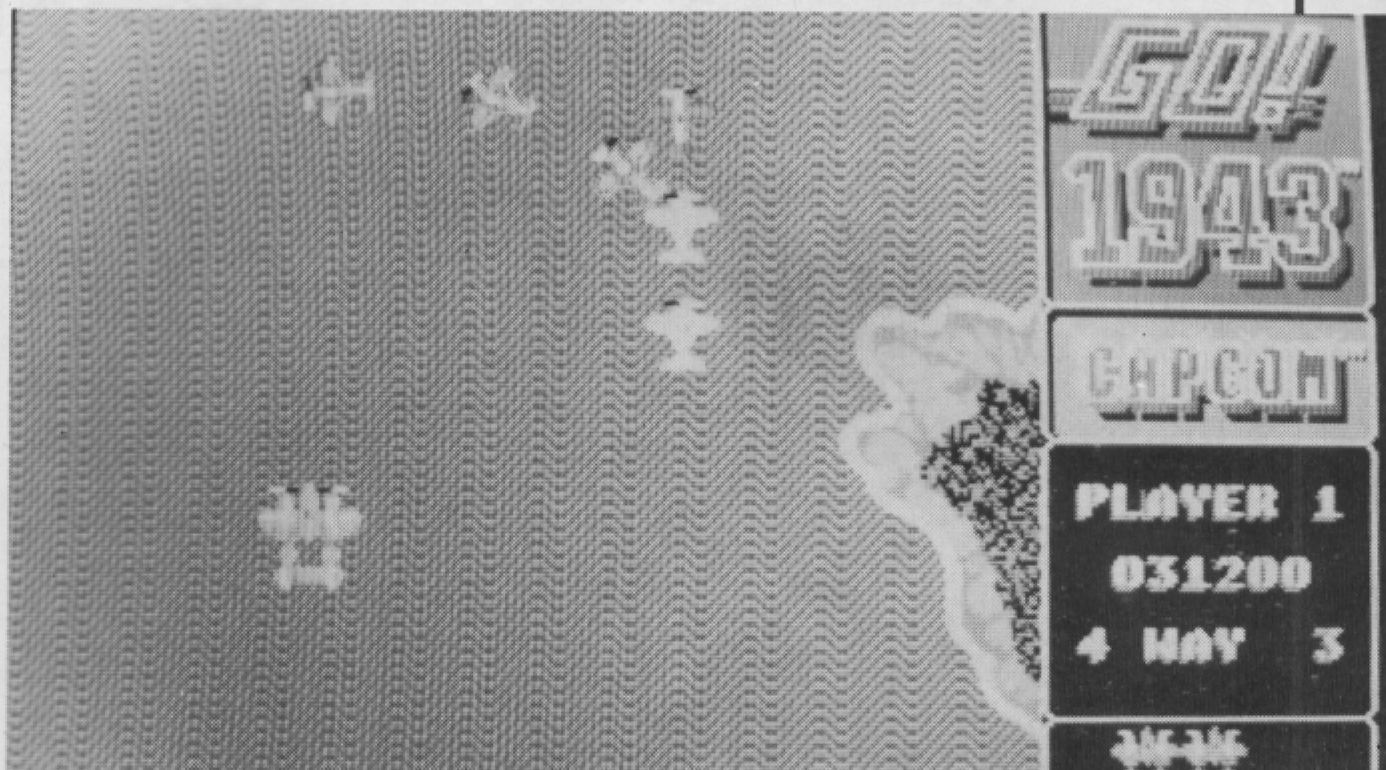
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SOFT 1





The history may be a little suspect, but that doesn't matter the game's a corker. Steve Jarratt warps back to 1943 to check out GO's latest coin-op conversion.

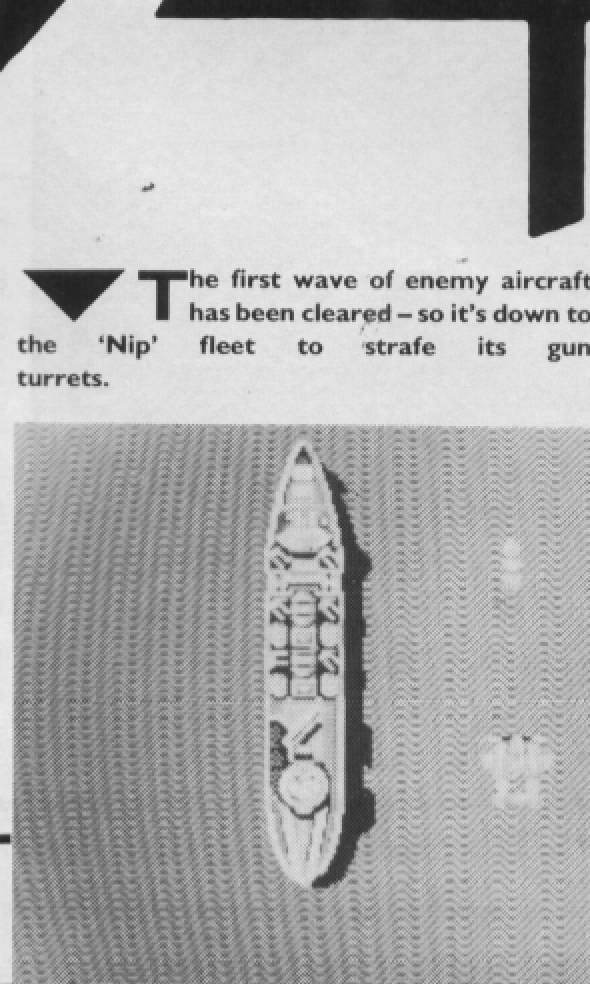
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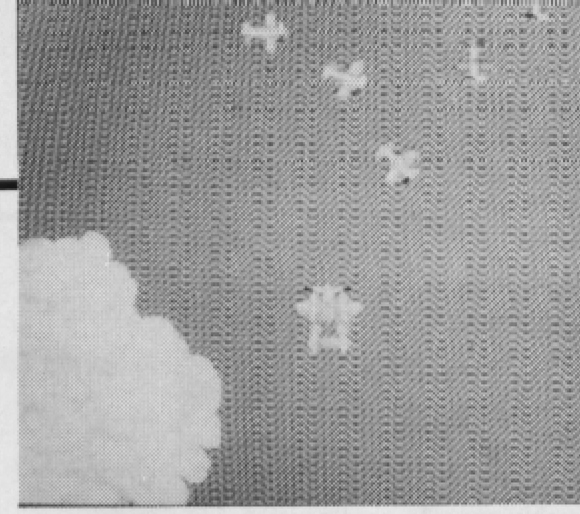
Purporting to be based on the Battle of Midway (which, incidentally, actually took place in 1942), US Gold's conversion of Capcom's lesser-known coin-op puts the player in direct confrontation with the massed might of the Japanese air and naval forces, in an attempt to reach and destroy the dreaded battleship Yamato. This may sound a bit heavy, but non-strategists can take heart: situated against a vertically scrolling background of islands, blue seas, and white clouds, the action is that of a straightforward shoot 'em up, with progressive overtones.

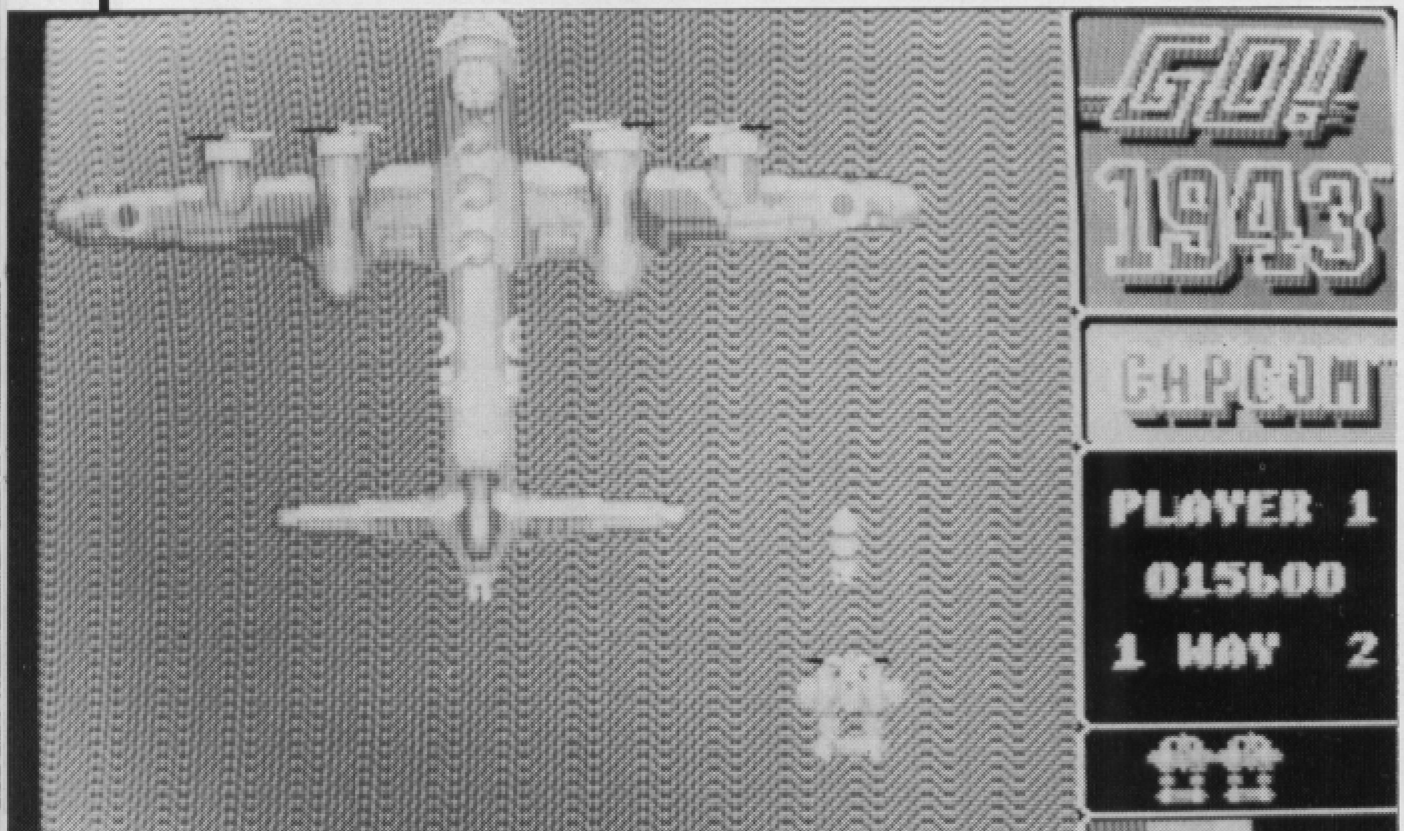
Frenzied air-to-air combat is augmented by the collection of icons which improve the aircraft's firepower. The icons are shot to cycle through the available options and the selected one is activated on contact. The basic POWer-up icon can thus reveal a selection of multifire, rapid fire and autofire variations which may in turn be collected for a cumulative effect.

This rather jaded blasting action is punctuated by the appearance of large end-of-level 'motherplanes' which re-

▼ The first wave of enemy aircraft has been cleared – so it's down to the 'Nip' fleet to strafe its gun turrets.



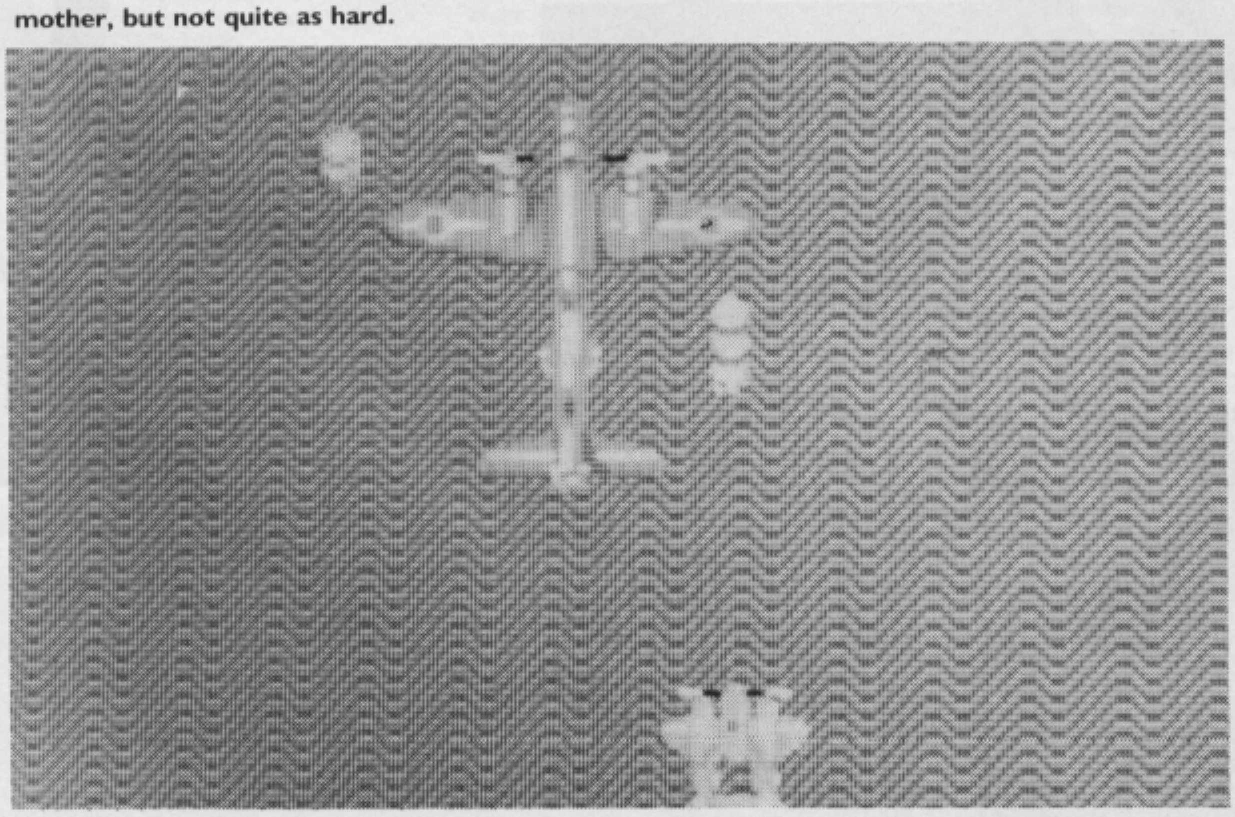




An end-of-level motherbomber takes plenty of hits before disappearing in a puff of smoke.

quire many hits to destroy them, and progressively large fleets of battleships and cruisers whose decks are strafed in order to disable the gun turrets. If the vessels are totally incapacitated, the player progresses to the next level with full power and an extra plane; if the attack is unsuccessful, the mission is aborted and must be restarted from scratch.

Taking on a middle-of-level baby-bomber – this baby's just like its mother, but not quite as hard.



A The Amiga version of 1943 is looking, to all intent and purposes, identical to its Atari counterpart. Capcom assures me that only the sound will change, using samples to create a soundtrack more in tune with the arcade original. The Commodore 1943 should be in the shops more or less as you read this – a full update will appear in our next issue.

ST This latest Capcom conversion would appear to be cannon fodder for the 16-bitters – nothing too impressive going on here. The ST copes admirably with all that's asked of it, however little that may be. The scrolling, complete with paralax clouds, is smooth (no prizes there, I'm not convinced the blue pattern, which differs from the mottled effect of the original, isn't simply being 'scrolled' using colour cycling. Still, the effect is good enough). Dogfighting with the smaller aircraft is adequately portrayed, but the larger 'motherplanes' are visually disappointing: instead of the engines gradually becoming engulfed in flames, the bombers simply disappear in a fizzle of tiny explosions once enough hits have been sustained. The accompanying sound effects are correspondingly naff; some sampled explosions would be most welcome. Special note must go to the inept instructions. In passing, they mention that 'rolling enables you to roll the plane to prevent you from being destroyed', but try as I might, I could not find a way to achieve a roll (in 1942 fashion, I presume). A compromise has been reached in the game itself: the plane may be moved by a number of different keys, but firing can only be activated by the joystick! Perhaps it would help if the person writing the 'instructions' actually saw the game as well.... 1943 remains another 'what if?' product. The coin-op was hardly the most astounding shoot 'em-up, and this conversion only serves to highlight its faults: progress relies heavily on the extra weaponry – which isn't permanent. And what happened to the simultaneous two player option? Variety is also seriously lacking: successive levels grow more difficult without proffering any rewards save for a few more naval targets. 1943's appeal is short lived and little mourned. This battle goes to the Japanese – through lack of interest.

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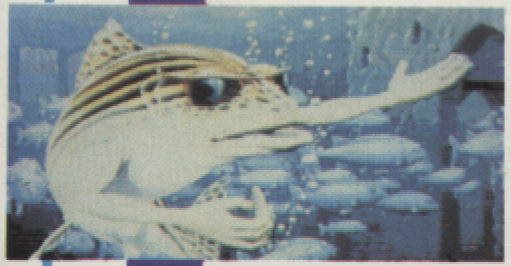
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Fish!



After moving away from the hackneyed realms of fantasy adventures to the seedy world of high finance in Corruption, Magnetic Scrolls has diversified once more with Fish!, full of aquatic gags and arguably its most enjoyable venture to date. Brian Nesbitt has a bowl.



At the outset of the game you're presented with rather a troublesome problem . . . you're upside down! If you want to get on with the rest of the adventure you'd better right yourself quickly. Perhaps a quick roll is in order?



The trendiest nightclub in Fishworld where the snazziest mermen and mermaids pop out for a quick Ant Egg cocktail.

Arguably the last thing you'd expect Magnetic Scrolls to release is a game that goes all out to make you laugh. But that's exactly what it's done with **Fish!** The player is cast as an 'Inter-Dimensional Espionage Operative',* a kind of trans-dimensional James Bond.

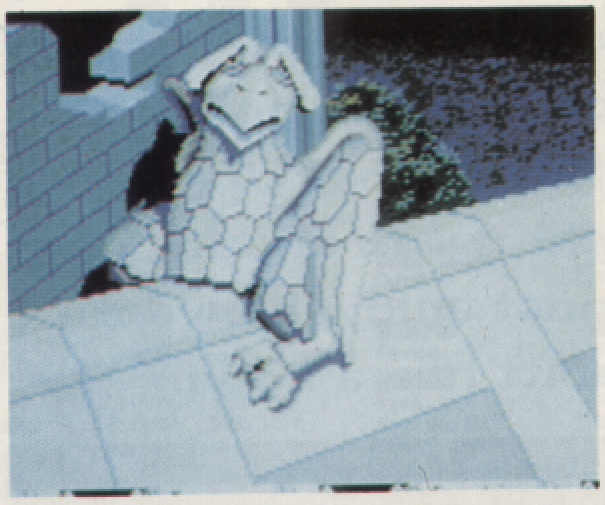
The Fish-inhabited world of Hydropolis is in grave danger, as the terrorist group known as the Seven Deadly Fins have stolen a focus wheel, a piece of apparatus that controls the flow of water through the fishworld. Quite inconventiently, this information is brough to you by your commanding officer, Sir Playfair Panchax, slap bang in the middle of your annual holiday as a goldfish. Sir Playfair arrives in your bowl inside a cheap plastic castle decoration which has recently been installed and delivers the news to you before telling you that you've been assigned to job of finding the focus wheel and returning it to Hydropolis before it runs dry.

Seeing as a fish isn't a particularly good spy, and a goldfish bowl isn't a very good place from which to conduct a resuce mission, Sir Playfair has provided you with three inter-dimensional warps, loopholes in time and space which allow you to travel to and from difficult dimensions and assume various guises. Each warp takes you to a independent mini-adventure, and the puzzles they present must be solved if the game is to be completed. For example, the small warp beams you into the world of humans, more specifically a recording studio somewhere in



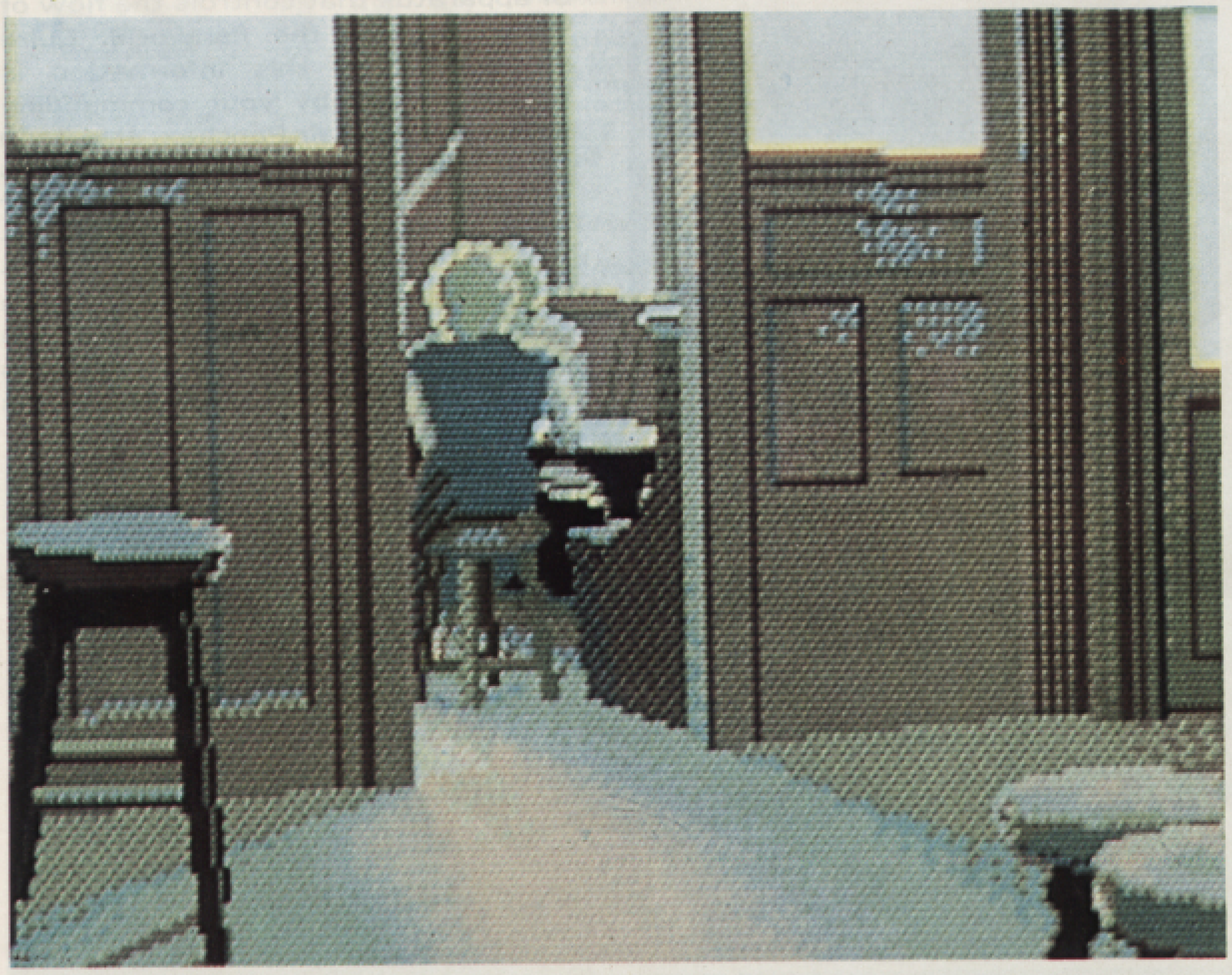
the city. You've just started a new job (in your human form of course) and the first problem you encounter is making the producer a cup of tea. It may seem like a menial task, but if you fail to complete it in time, you're out on your ear and you can't find out more about what's going on behind that locked studio door. Another scenario (accessed by selecting a different warp from your bowl) is set near the ruins of an ancient abbey where a mysterious abandoned van and an even more mysterious note is found. Again, an initial problem must be solved, this time finding a source of light to allow you to enter the wilderness, before any real headway can be made. The third sub-game takes place in a large forest where you find, among other things, the infamous Mickey Blowtorch, a self-confessed warp addict who lives in a tree stump. Whether or not Mickey helps or hinders you on your mission depends on how you treat him.

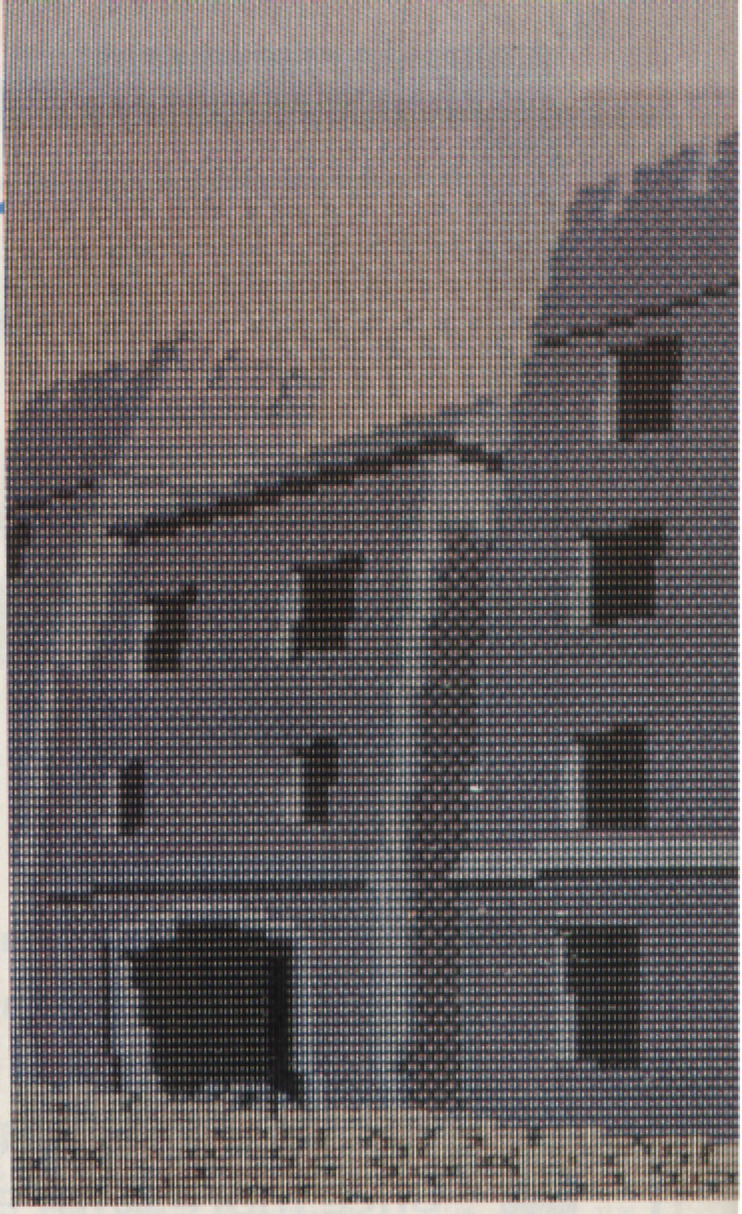
The Seven Deadly Fins crop up in each of the three sub-games (eg: in the recording stuios they appear as a bizarre heavy metal band), and if you can complete each one in spite of their constant meddling, you are allowed to go on and attempt the REAL mission, for which the first three were just



Is this a vital clue of just a red herring? Be ef-fish-ent and find out.

The great British pub, just the plaice to order a pint of bass. There's a mysterious figure over in the saloon bar that could be worth interrogating.

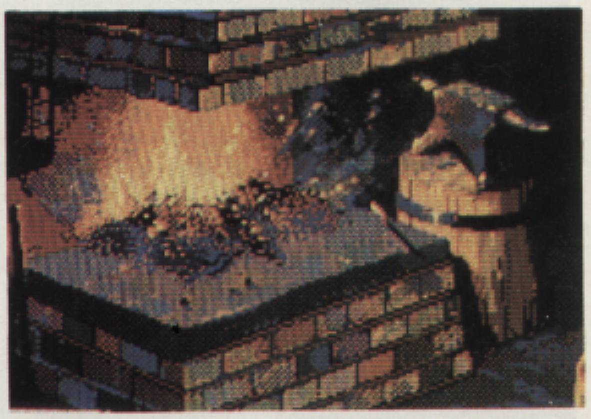




Sir Playfair Panchax's humble abode. There's plenty of fool inside but mind you don't get salmon-ella poisoning.

testers...

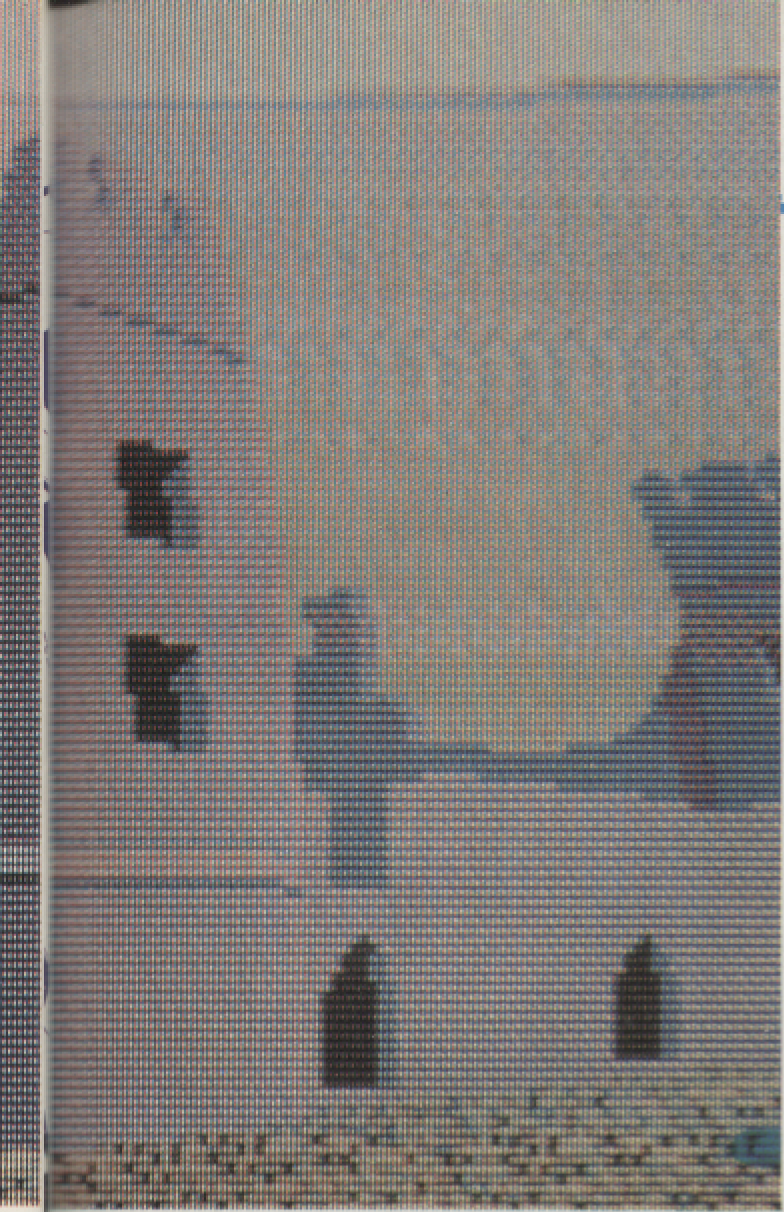
As usual, **Fish!** comes with all kinds of whacky surreal packaging to complement the humour within the game itself. Included is a 'care for your fish' instruction leaflet, a large manual detailing how and how not to warp (complete with quotes from Great Warpers Of Our Time), and a selection of cypheric hints that you can type in when the going gets too tough for the average fish.



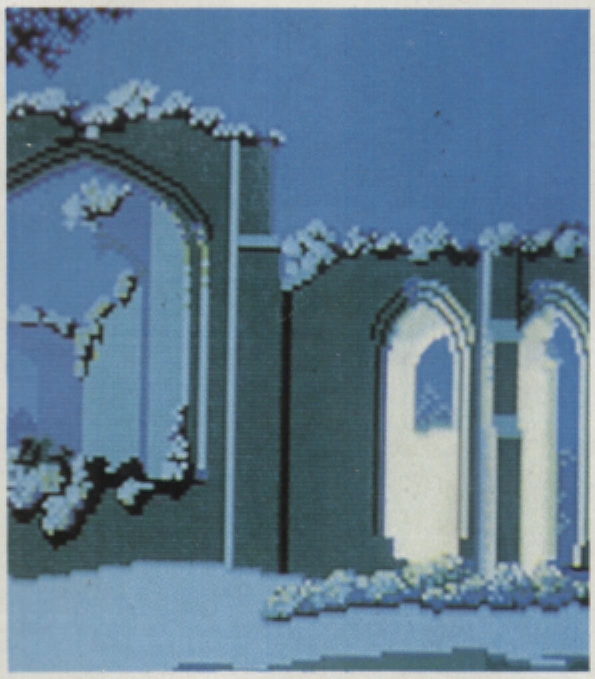
PC

PC owners won't have to miss out on the Fish! experience, but only those blessed with such luxuries as an EGA card will be able to savour anything visual to accompany certain location descriptions. Anyone with CGA will have to use a little imagination.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now



Be careful, the Seven Deadly Fins are lurking somewhere around this ruined abbey and they'd like nothing more than to put you out of action . . . for good.



ST Magnetic Scrolls took a big risk with Fish! but the truth is the gamble has paid off handsomely. The emphasis is on fish-related puns and gags and they come both thick and fast (and in the main they are very funny). The idea of warping to and from different sub-games has been well implemented and works like a dream. The adventures are sufficiently different from each other to sustain lasting interest, and the neverending stream of fish jokes helps the game along. Although the parser doesn't seem to have advanced much since Guild or Corruption, the overall game structure is slightly better than both of these. The graphics are up to Magnetic Scroll's usual high standard (although there are a couple of dodgy pictures in there). There are plenty of puzzles to find and overcome, ranging from difficult to (almost) too difficult. That said, Fish! is quite possibly their easiest adventure to date. It's certainly their most enjoyable.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now

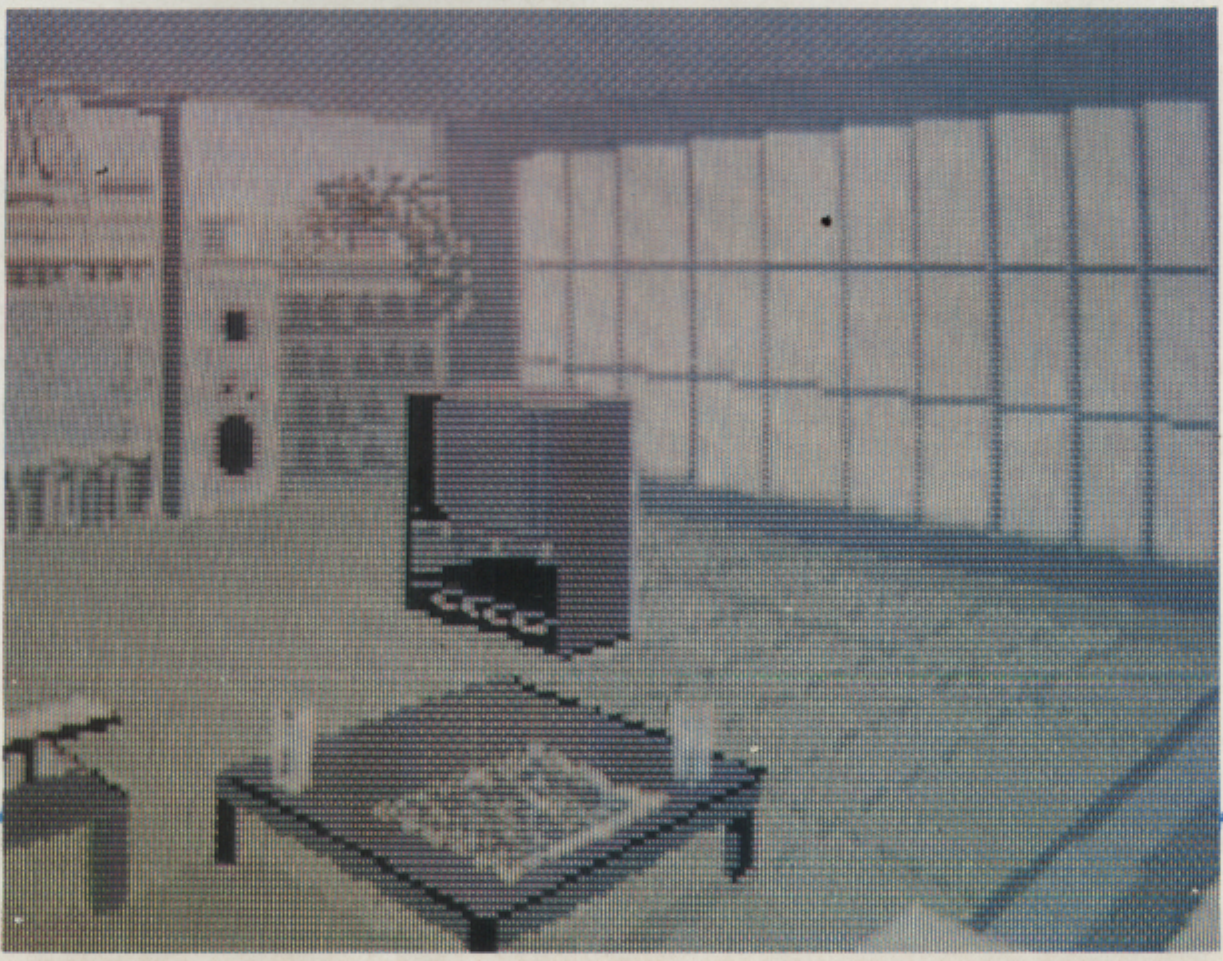


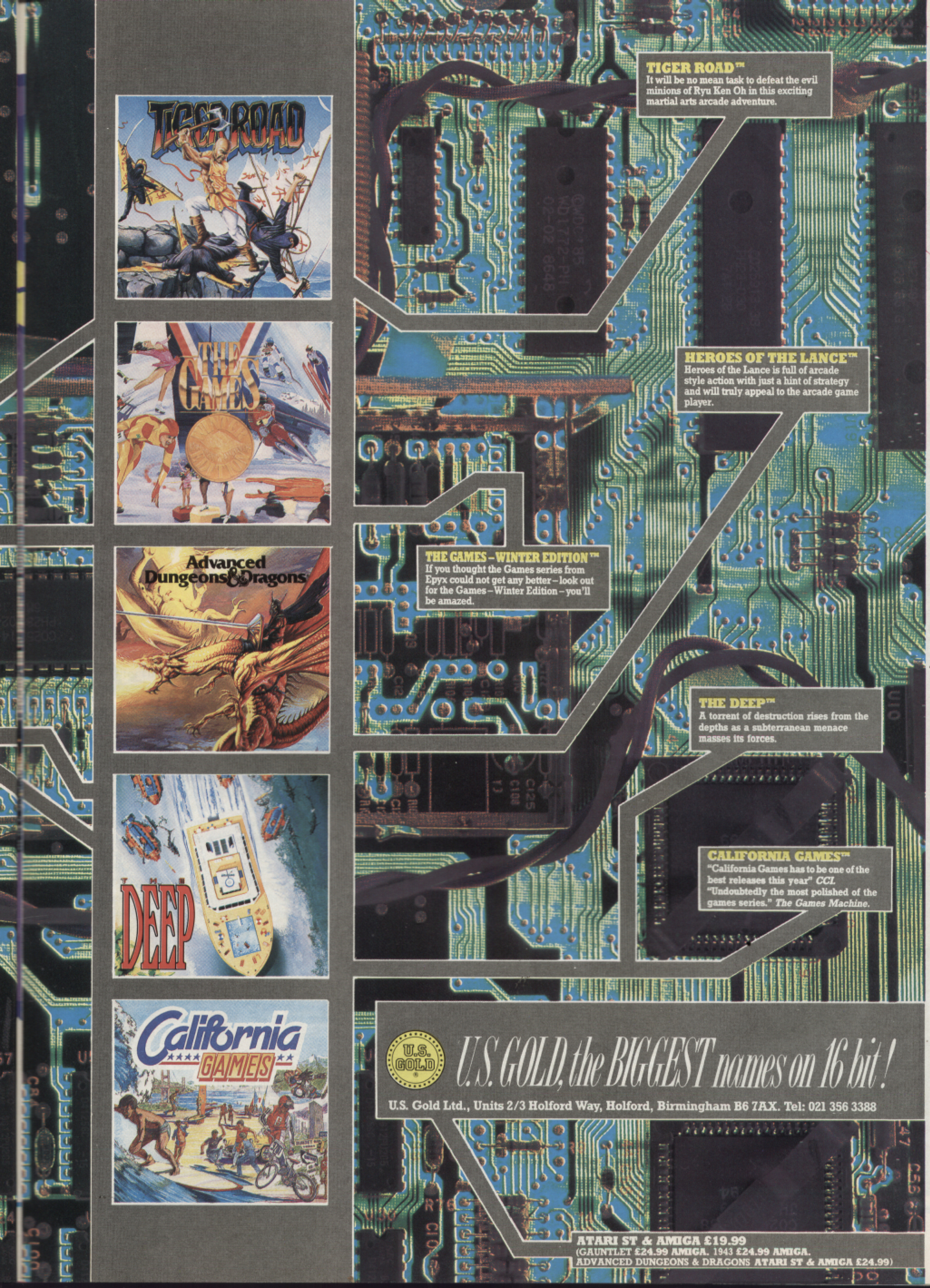
Looks a bit like The Pawn, eh? The dense forest may look like a scene from Mag Scroll's first effort, but the puzzles are slightly easier (thank goodness!).

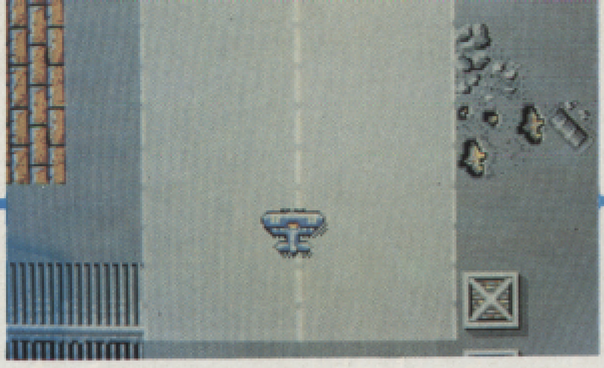
The plus lounge of a top record producer's office is one of the locations you'll first warp to. Making tea may sound like a trivial problem to solve but remember, the kettle is locked and the key can't be found. Or can it?

A Gameplay-wise, Fish! on the Amiga is identical to it's ST and PC stablemates. Graphically there's hardly any difference at all, and the only enhancements are the addition of speech and some incredibly whacky title screen music including sampled bubbling noises and the occasional cat howl.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	80%
PLAYABILITY	82%
VALUE	76%
OVERALL	**80%**



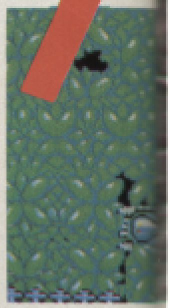

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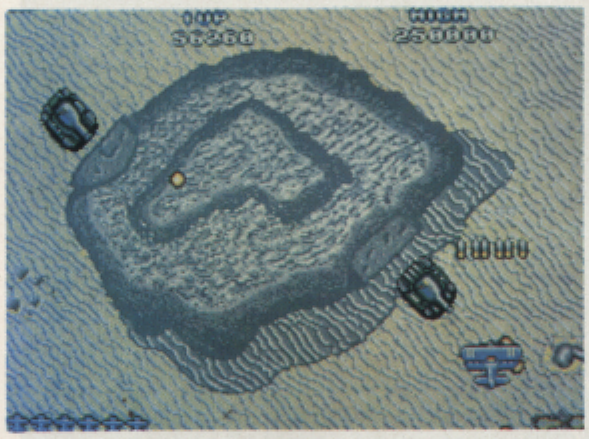


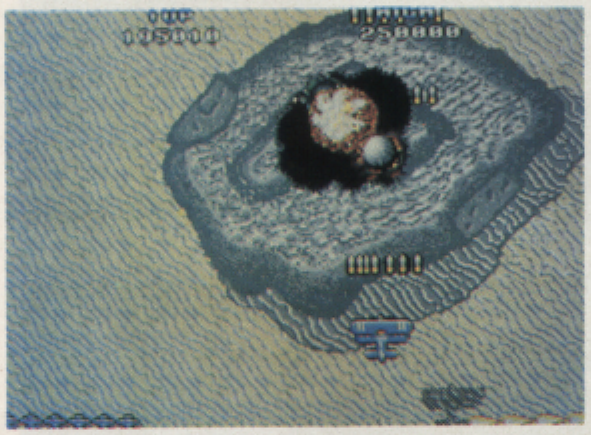


Fly Sh

Capcom's vertically scrolling shoot 'em up 1942 inspired many enhanced clones, amongst them Taito's Flying Shark. Gary Penn dons goggles, flying jacket and helmet to get in the mood and give the Hun what for in Firebird's long-awaited 16-bit conversion.







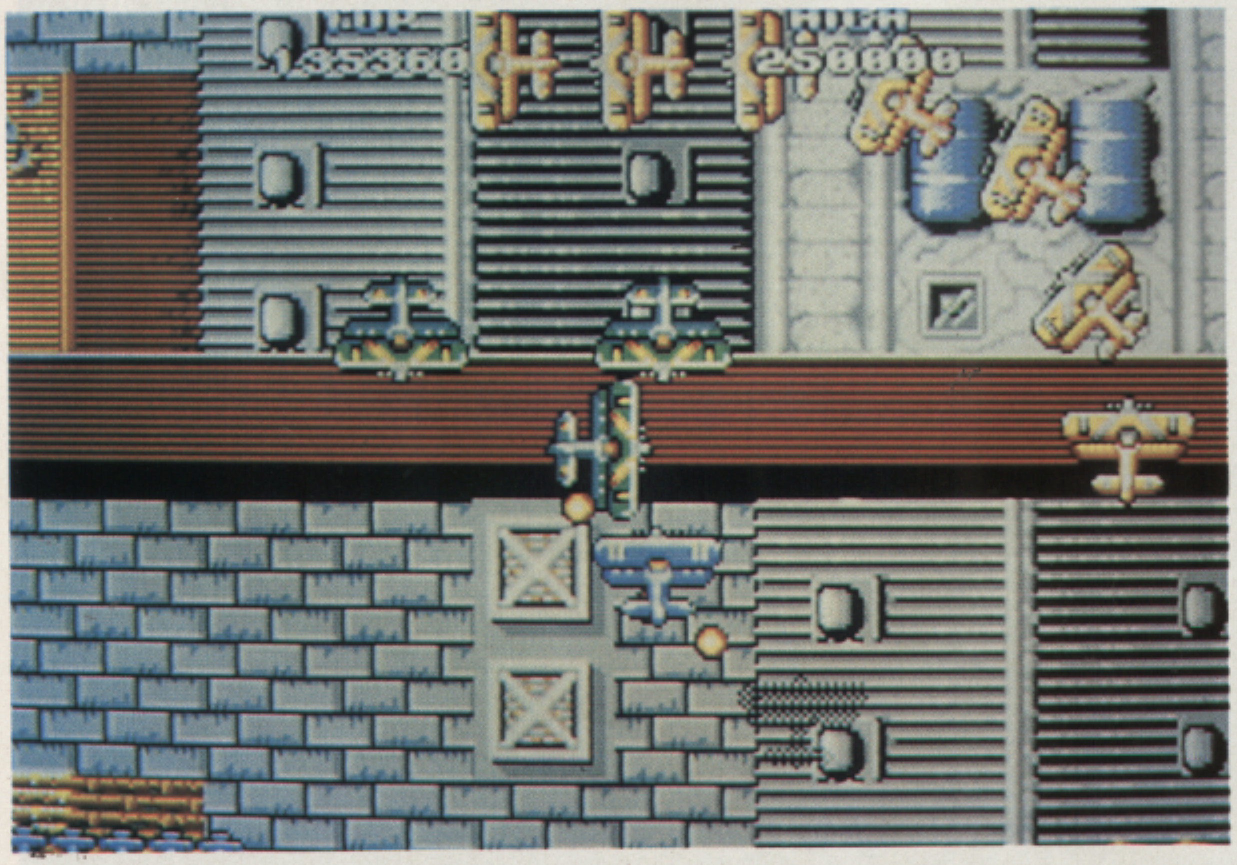
Japanese coin-op manufacturers certainly like their vertically scrolling shoot 'em up to have a wartime flavour . . . Capcom's **1942**, **1943** and **Commando**, SNK's **Ikari Warriors** and **Guerilla War**, and of course Taito's **Flying Shark**. But will anyone lose any sleep over the fact that the plane in **Flying Shark** is of the twin-wing variety whereas 'real' Flying Sharks were single-engine fighters? Nah. Who's worried about historical accuracy in a shoot 'em up?

Like the uncomplicated platform fun of Firebird's other Taito licence, **Bubble Bobble**, the simplistic blasting delights of **Flying Shark** quickly proved a cult coin-op hit. There's not a great deal of brain-taxing variety in the action: simply guide your bi-plane through five vertically-scrolling levels full of enemy planes, tanks, gun emplacements and boats. When the going gets a little tough, unleash one of your limited supply of bombs to dispose of any enemy craft and bullets in the vicinity.

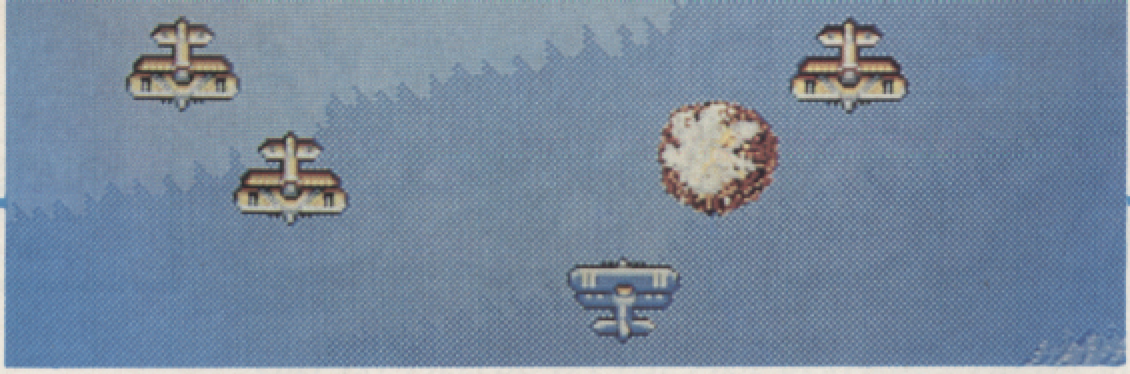
Occasionally, special formations of enemy planes snake their way onto the screen as you fly and shoot your way along. When these are shot, and depending on their colour, a token is released or bonus points are awarded.



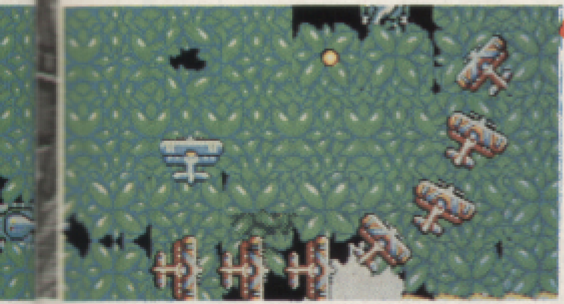
Not exactly the genuine article, but it's a P40 Kittyhawk with the correct colouring and Flying Shark artwork. The markings belong to Ray Hannah, the original commander of the Red Arrows (it's supposed to read SUE, after his wife – that's her pretty little rear on the plane's). The Flying Shark didn't really exist – officially. It was the 112 squadron stationed in North Africa in WW2 who were the first to adopt the shark's mouth decoration on the P40s. So now you know.

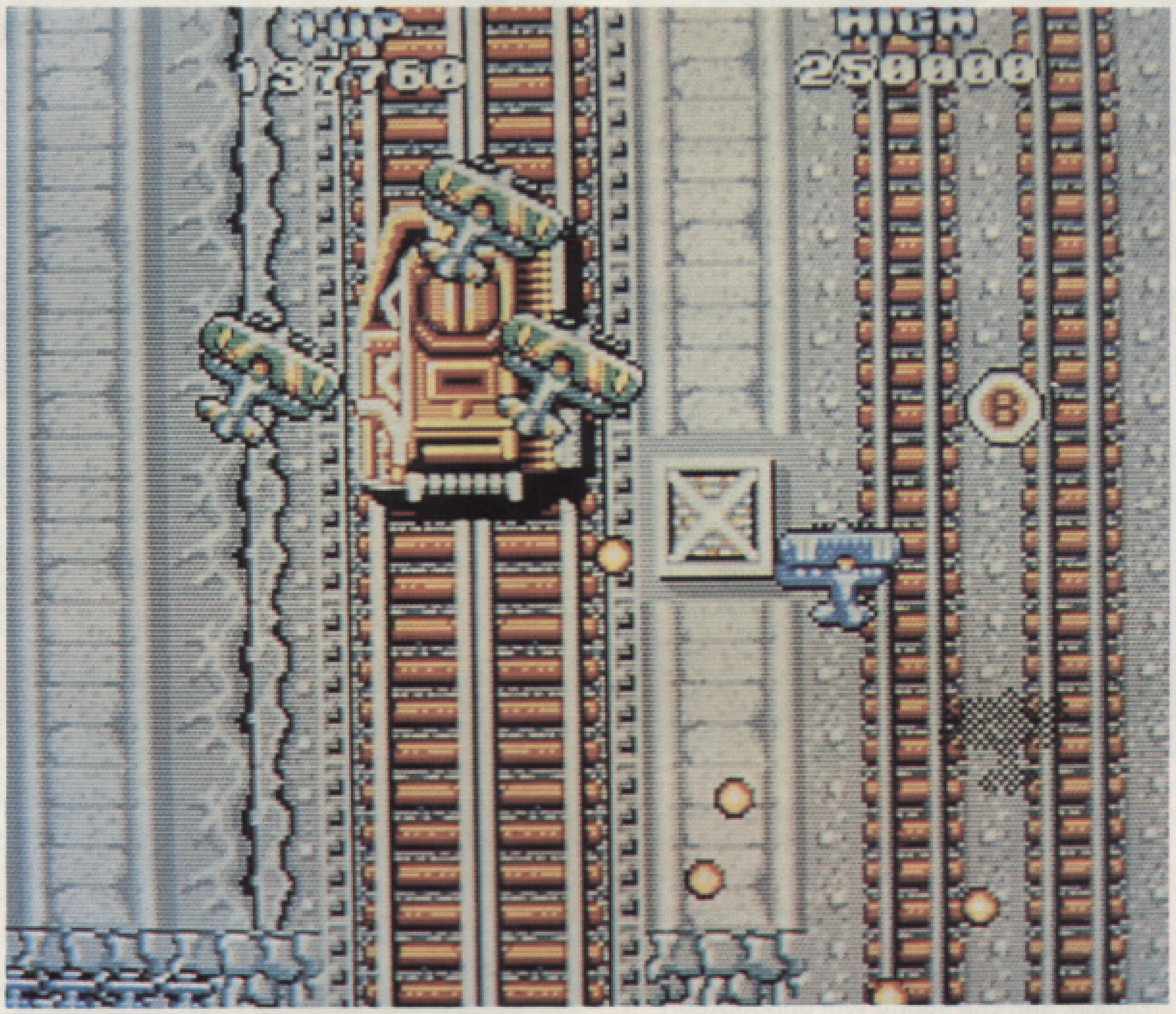


Shoot down this yellow squadron for a 1,000 point bonus. Further on a white squadron attacks, releasing an extra life token when eliminated.



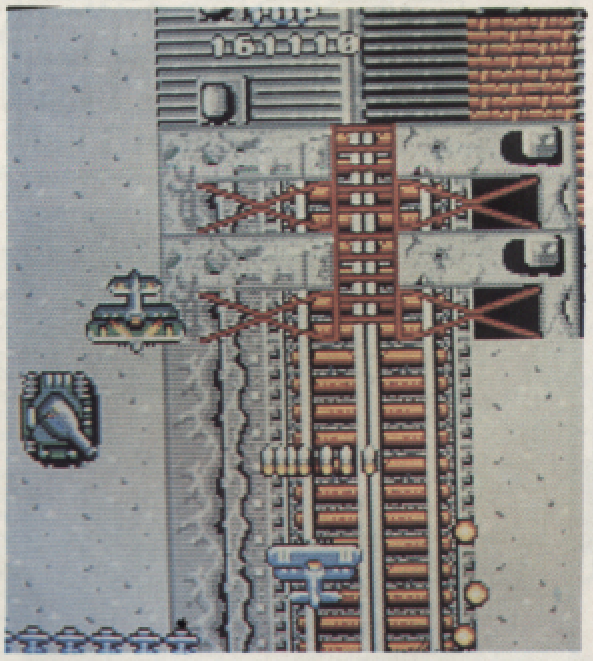
ying ark



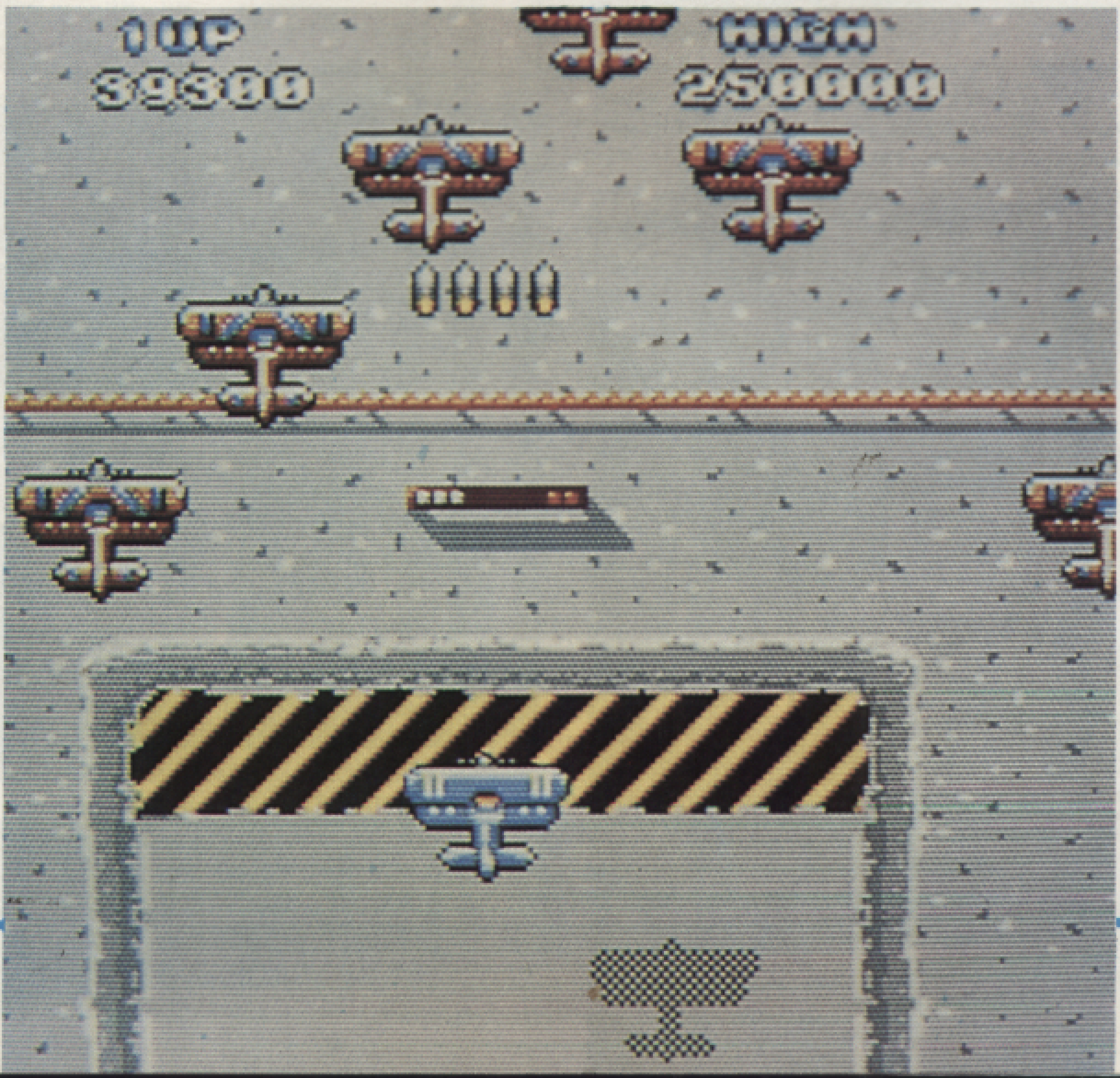


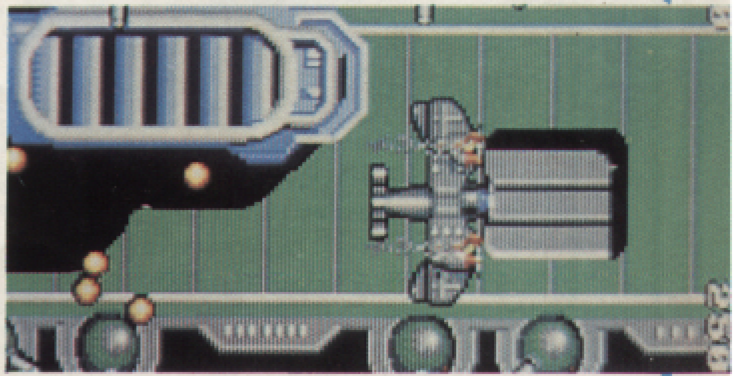
Collecting tokens emblazoned with an 'S' boosts your firepower, and with a spray comprising a maximum of nine bullets a shot, you can really give the 'boche' a bashing.

Flying over the railway tracks on Level Four. It takes dozens of shots to put the big beggar out of action, so it's advisable to unleash a bomb or two in its general direction. That's handy, there's a B token to collect to the right of your plane . . .



The odds against you are increasing, but those extra bullets and a little extra grit should see you through safely.

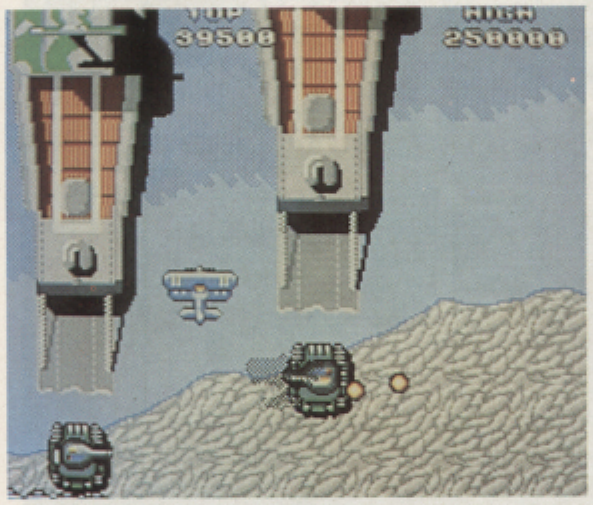




REVIEW



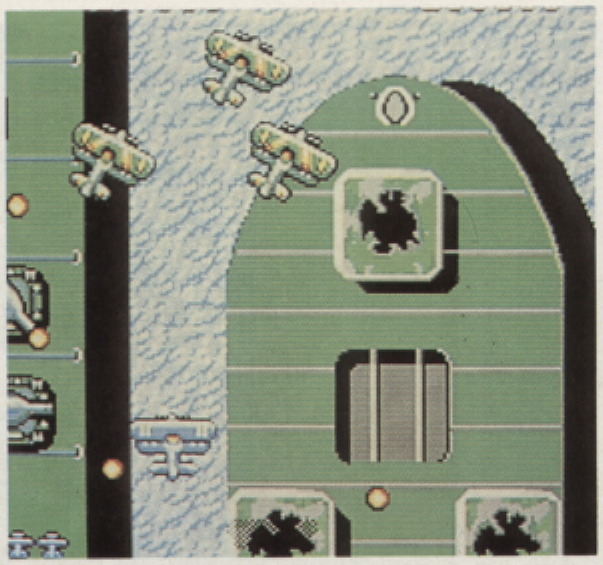
We will fight them on the beaches . . . We will nevah surrendah!



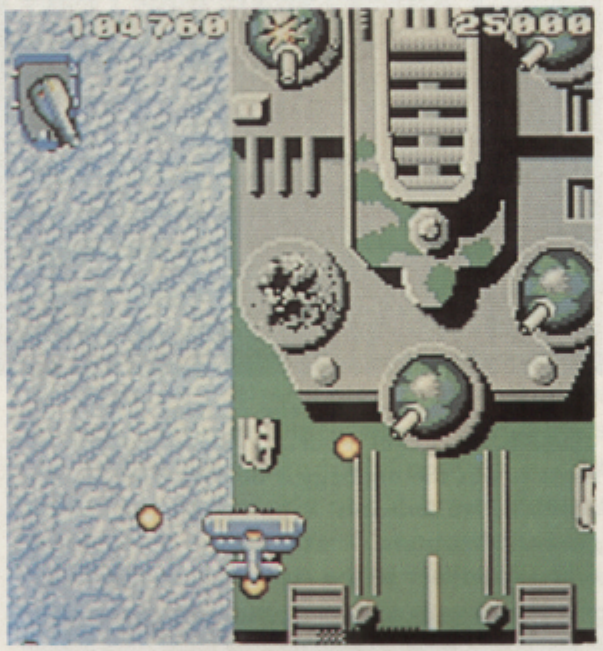
A Work on this incarnation should be almost complete by the time you read this. Firebird reckons that the Amiga version will be smoother than its Atari cousin, and the sound will unboubtedly be improved. But there's still no side to side scrolling in keeping with the arcade original, which does tend to stop this conversion from being that little bit special.



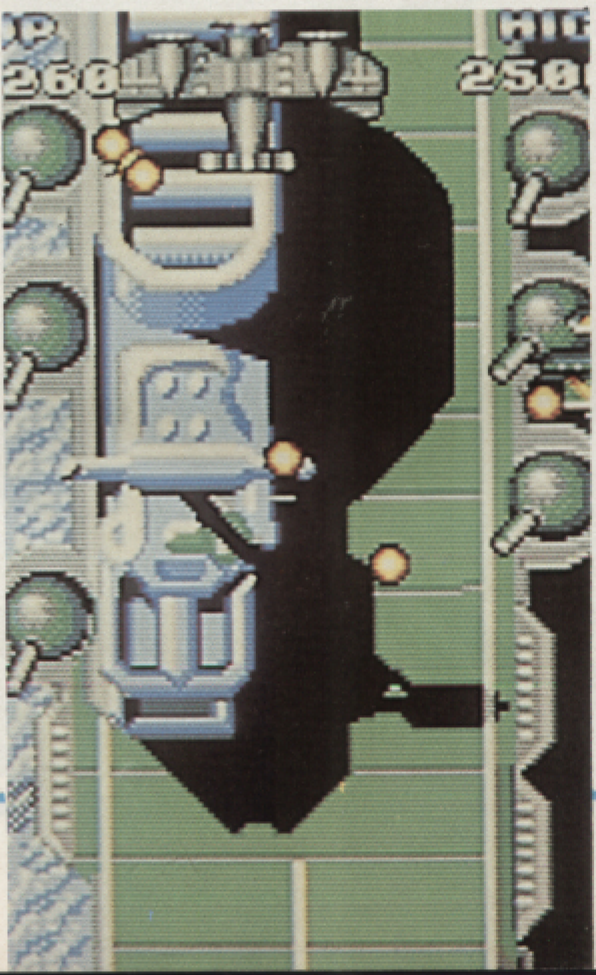
The best way of dealing with these aggressive and well-protected tanks is a bomb – seen in action above. These handy devices eradicate any enemy craft or missiles on screen, but they take a second to initiate, so think ahead.



Level Three sees this large heavily-armed battleship dishing out deadly doses of death in your direction . . .



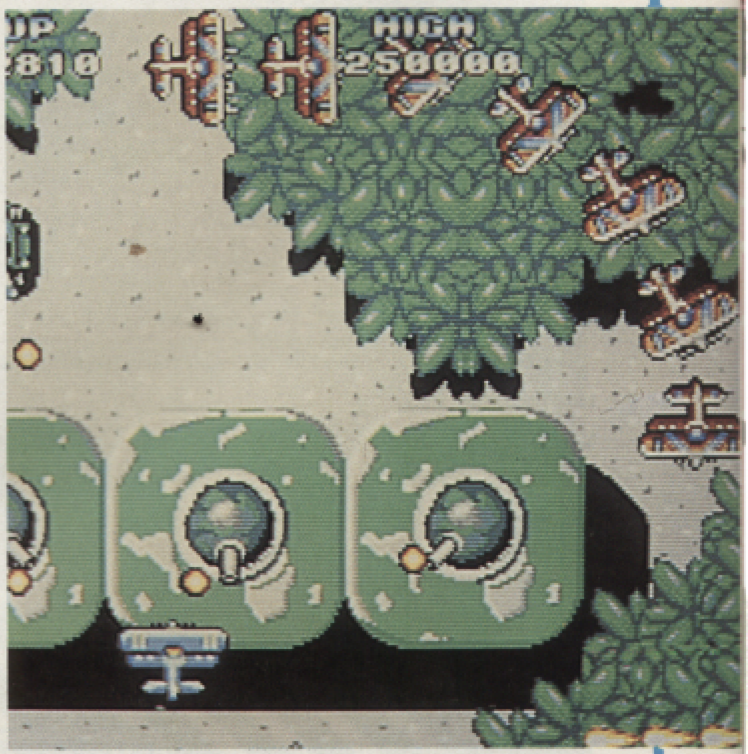
Deeper into the third level, the battleship returns to cause havoc – so make sure you take out all of its gun emplacements the first time around.



ST Decent vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups are a bit of a rarity on the 16-bit machines. Come to think of it, there aren't very many decent blasters around full stop. It's not as if the ST isn't capable of producing something of near coin-op quality – look at Xenon. Firebird's conversion of Flying Shark isn't as slick or cosmetically accomplished as its arcade parent. which is a pity but certainly nothing to lose sleep over. At least the programmers have managed to capture a sizeable slice of the original's playability. The five levels are of a reasonable length, and the enemy craft frequently appear at the most inopportune moments, moving in devilish patterns to provide an infuriatingly addictive challenge. Despite not being 100% faithful to the coin-op in terms of graphics and sound, Flying Shark on the ST features detailed and colourful backdrops and sprites accompanied by fucntional effects and music. What we have here is a fairly accurate interpretation of a derivative but playable coin-op which drops on US Gold's conversion of 1943 from a few thousand feet.

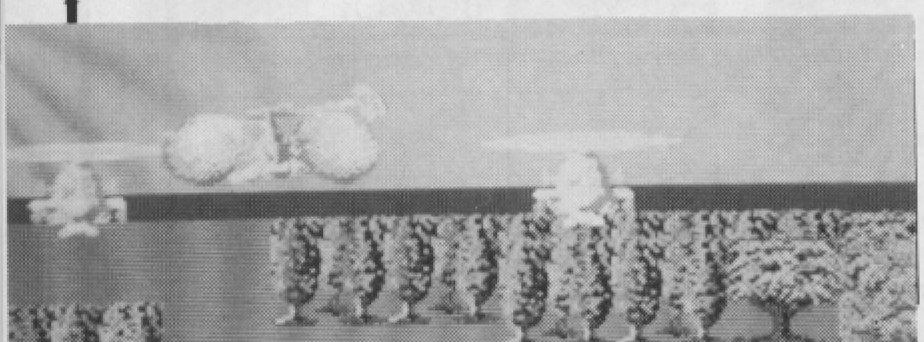
PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	76%
SOUND	51%
VALUE	60%
PLAYABILITY	80%

OVERALL 76%



The Shark's firepower is boosted by shooting down squadrons of red planes and collecting the 'S' tokens.

Hellfire A

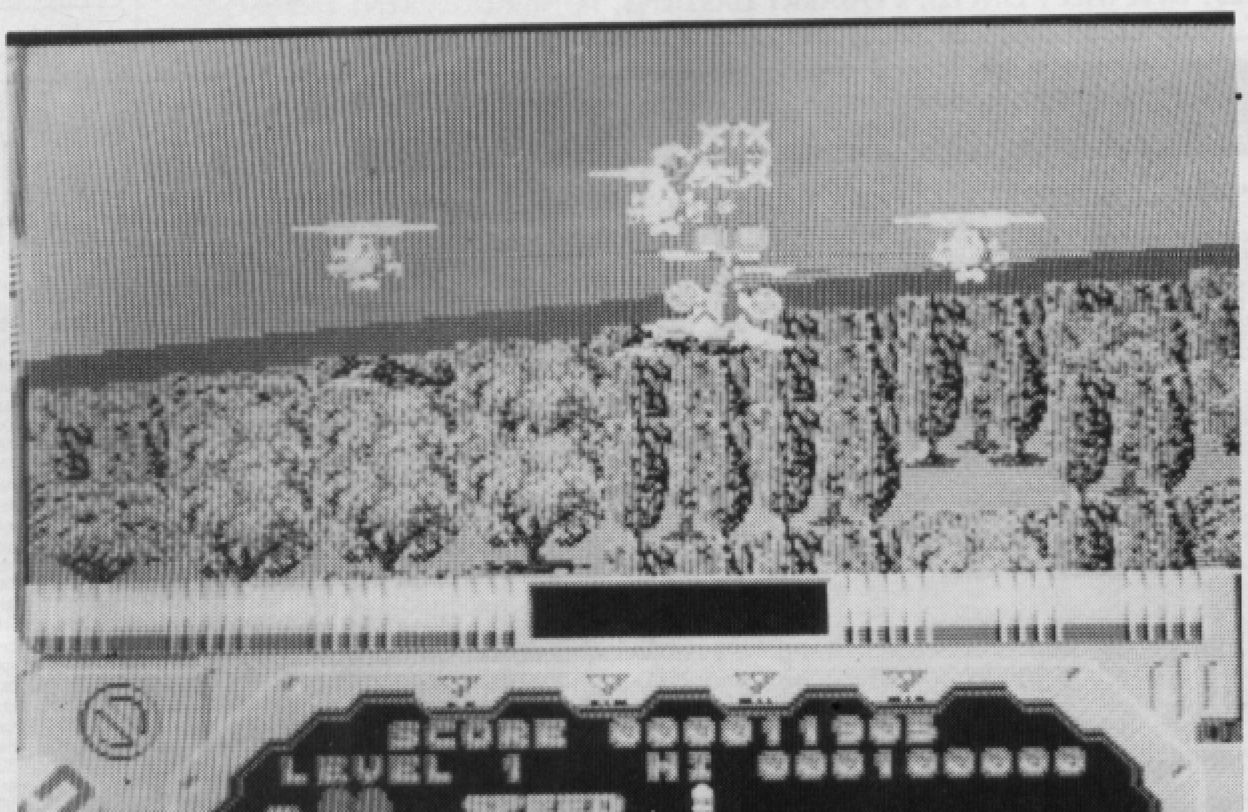


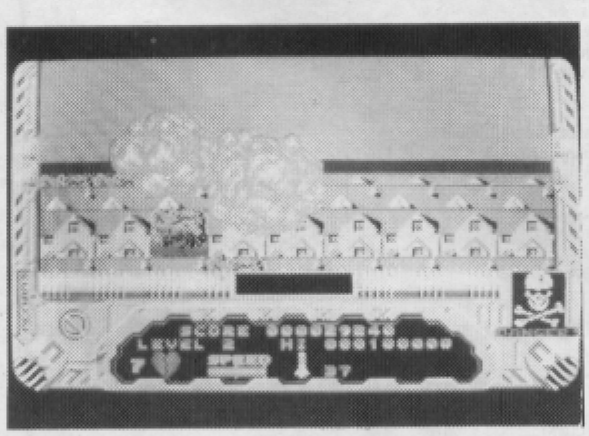
Riding in on the wave of anticipation for Thunderblade and Afterburner comes Hellfire Attack. So how does Martech's offering fare in the light of the big licences? Steve Jarratt puts everything into first-person perspective.

Taking a backseat viewpoint of the proceedings, the would-be pilot, flies a Supercobra helicopter gunship over (literally) rolling landscapes, seas and houses, guiding the craft through wave after wave of approaching jet fighters and their accompanying barrage of homing missiles.

The Supercobra is defended using a 20mm cannon (which fires constantly and is only effective against short-range targets) together with 40 Hellfire laser-guided launch-and-leave missles. Oncoming aircraft are locked onto using the floating cursor which automatically targets the next missile; a jab of the fire button spells certain doom to the enemy pilot.

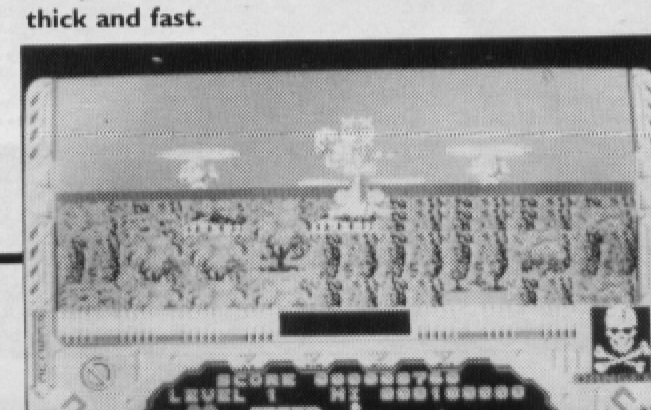
The chopper is also fitted with a turbo-booster which enables it to cover ground more quickly and accomplish an **Afterburner**-style roll (a disorienting manoeuvre which invariably proves fatal).

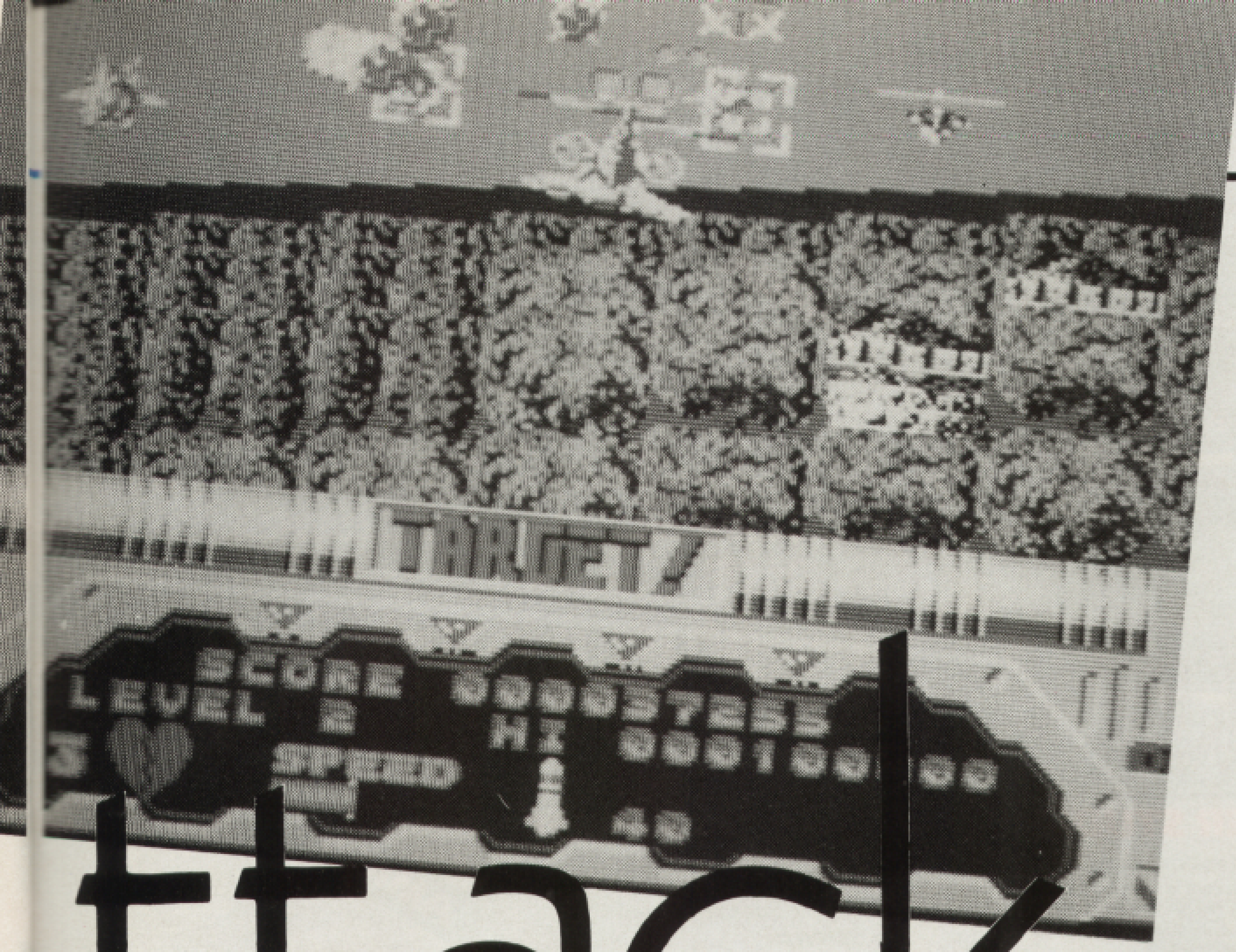




Prince Charles wouldn't approve of those unbroken rooflines, but you don't have time to worry about that as your Supercobra erupts in a glowing fireball.

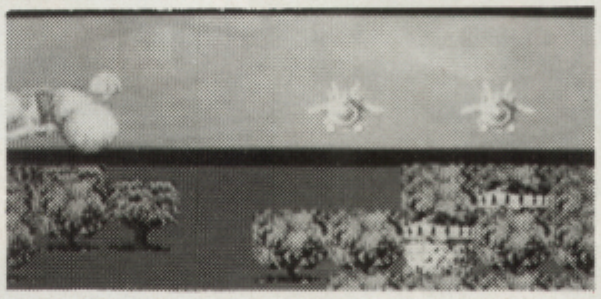
Level One gets off to a flying start as the enemy comes screaming in thick and fast.

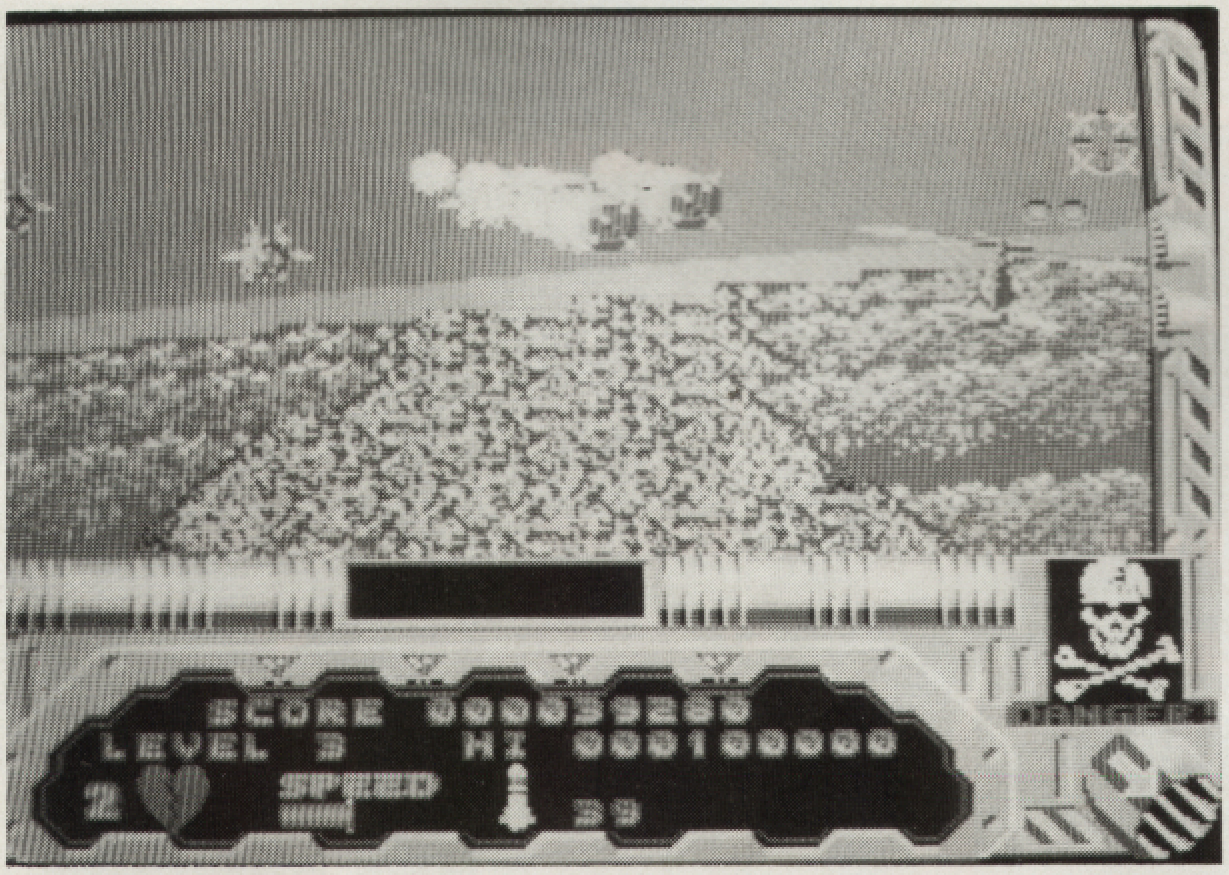




ttack

At the end of each level, the Supercobra lands at a 'camouflaged supply dump' – effectively removing the necessity for extra graphics – whereupon the craft is restocked with missiles before continuing in the same vein, but over a different landscape.





▲ **Another enemy is trapped for his final seconds in your locking sights, but there's trouble heading your way in the shape of a pair of guided missiles.**

ST 3D 'head-on' games can be difficult to implement at the best of times – Sega barely succeed with a handful of 16-bit chips and several megabytes of memory. So it only comes as a small surprise that Martech's offering fails dismally. As the screenshots show, no attempt at depth or perspective has been made: blocks of graphics simply slither down the screen, giving the vague impression of hovering over a rotating barrel – and little else. The ST's sound chip also remains in neutral for most of the game, relying upon a tedious white noise hiss to represent the roar of a helicopter engine (unless, of course, that's exactly what a Supercobra sounds like). Unfortunately, the gameplay makes a fitting suitor to the above deficiences with some repetitive blasting. Destroying hordes of enemy fighters is gratifying enough, but they are also quite adept at doing unto you. Evading their homing missiles is pretty tricky, and on the off-chance that some decent progress is made, a large spiky ball (no mention of which appears in the instructions) floats into view and slowly but surely homes in on your craft. Throw in a swarm of enemy missiles, and even Wild Bill Stealey couldnt survive. Nine choppers are provided – and you need them all. The quality of this game, coupled with the timing of its release gives the impression of a token effort cobbled together to get on the Sega bandwagon. And that just isn't good enough.

PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	39%
SOUND	29%
VALUE	30%
PLAYABILITY	40%

OVERALL 38%

A This version looks and plays identically to its Atari counterpart. The sound is comparatively better, but this isn't saying much where the Amiga is concerned. **Hellfire Attack** remains unimpressive.

PRICE:	£19.99
RELEASE DATE:	Out Now
GRAPHICS	39%
SOUND	29%
VALUE	30%
PLAYABILITY	40%

OVERALL 38%

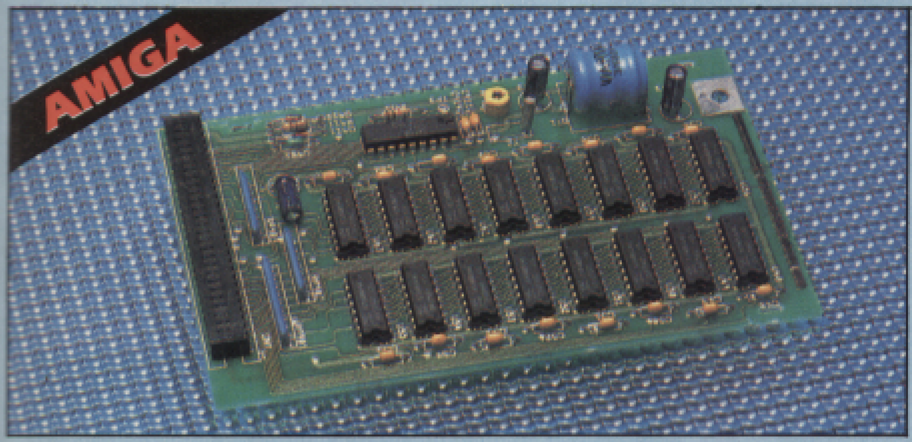
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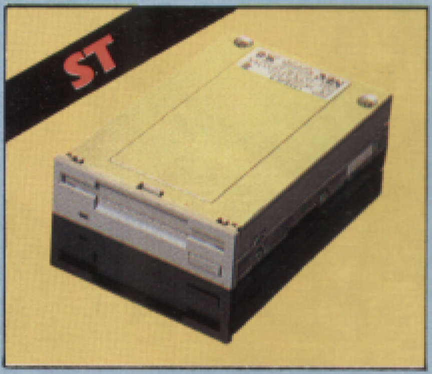


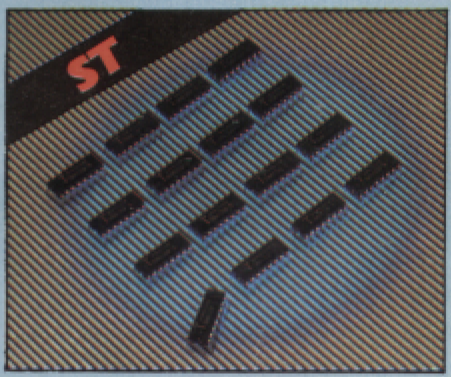


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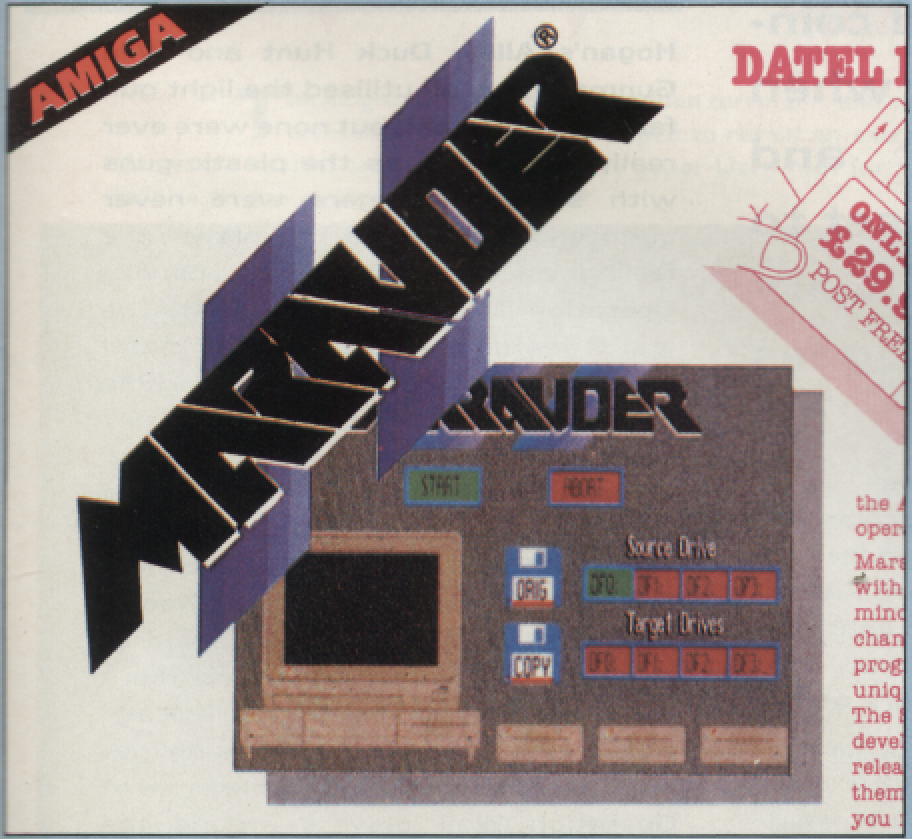
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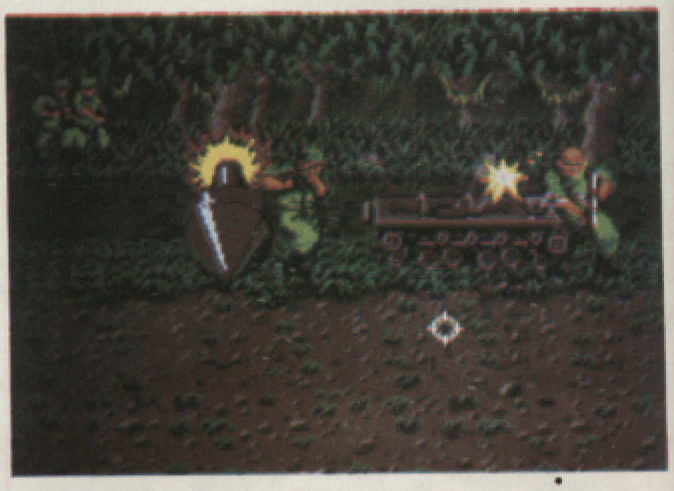
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▼ **W**atch out! A lethal anti-tank rocket speeds towards you, ready to severely damage your health unless you can shoot it down in mid-flight. Also watch out for the knives and grenades that are hurled towards you as you progress.





Taito's controversial Uzi-based coin-op blew the arcades to pieces when it was released last year and Ocean's long-awaited conversion looks set to do the same on the ST and Amiga. Gary Whitta loads a fresh magazine and goes hostage hunting.

Dig deep enough inside the mind of even the most timid, placid and complacent person and you'll find a potential gun-toting psychopathic killer bursting to get out. Perhaps that's why Taito's **Operation Wolf** did so well in the arcades. Probably the most controversial coin-op of the year (or indeed any year), it revived the long-dead arcade tradition of machines with light guns bolted onto the cabinet that shoot down on-screen targets. **Shark Attack, Hogan's Alley, Duck Hunt** and **Wild Gunman** have all utilised the light gun feature in the past, but none were ever really successful, as the plastic guns with squeaky triggers were never quite enough to give the player the feeling of actually shooting people. **Operation Wolf** changed all that. The gun it featured was a full size metal replica of the Uzi 9mm sub-machine gun. Better still, it was hydraulically powered, as it juddered, vibrated and kicked when it was fired – just like the real thing!

The blatant killing and violent massacre on a huge scale that made **Operation Wolf** so enjoyable also served to plunge it into controversy, and there were cries of it being ideologically unsound and the crazed 'come an' get it, muther!' expressions on the faces of **Operation Wolf** players around the country served to strengthen this theory. This, however, didn't stop Ocean from snapping up the licence a while back and farming the job of conversion out to some guys in France who then went on to boast that they could get the conversion to be arcade perfect. And it looks like they were right.



◀ **T**he mission map that appears at the beginning of each level. First attack the communication set-up to stop the front line radioing for more troops, then proceed to the jungle (where a top enemy officer lies in wait). The powder magazine is the ideal place to top up your ammo before attacking the village where, if you complete the level, your health points are replenished. Then it's off to the concentration camp from where you rescue hostages before bundling them onto a plane at the heavily guarded airport and flying back home. Easy, huh?

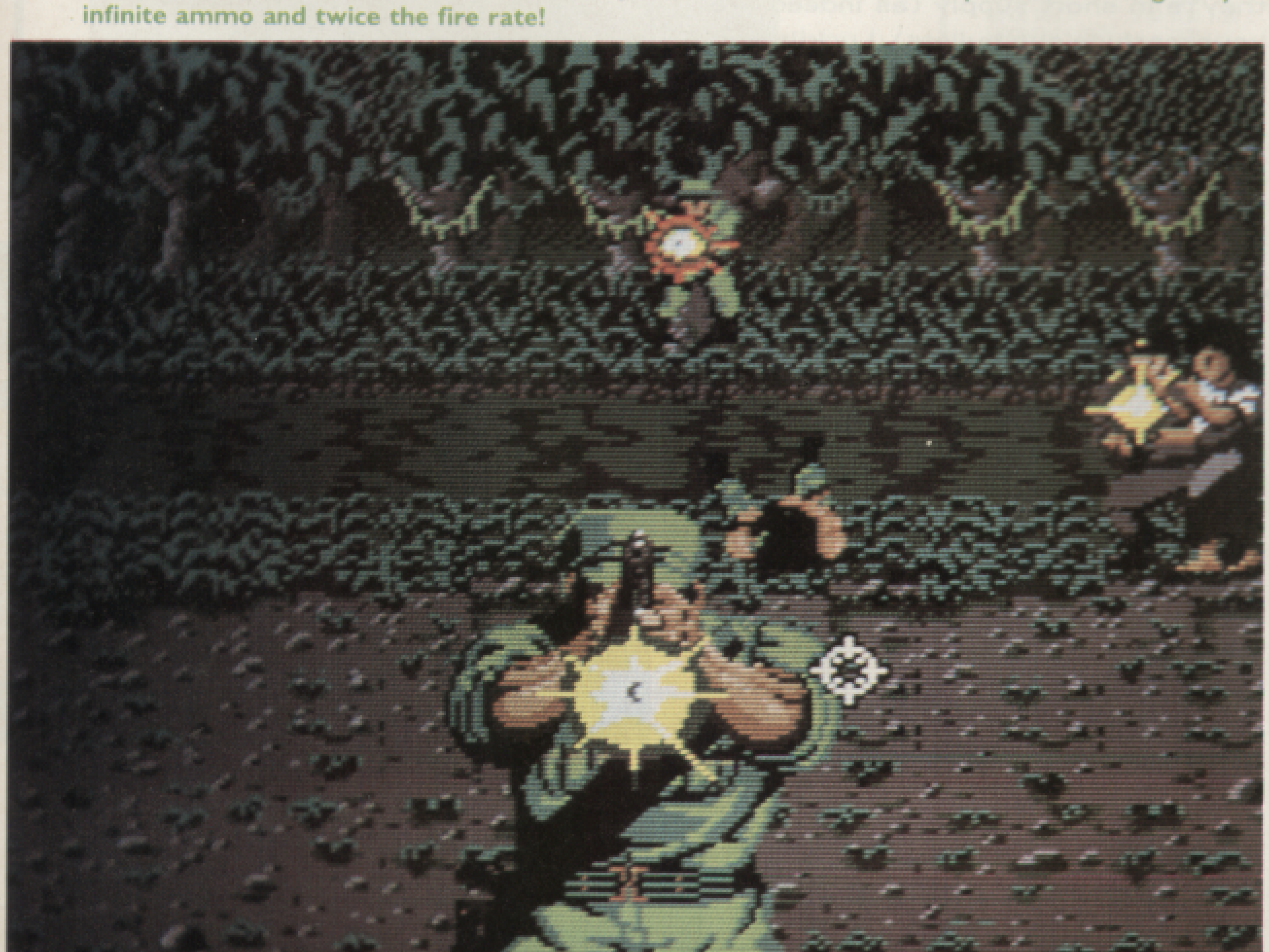
...ration Wolf







The jungle section has many hidden terrors. . . and surprises. Shoot the coconuts off the trees and they may break open to reveal an extra magazine, rocket bomb, pep pill (for extra health) or perhaps the elusive super-Uzi which for a limited period of time gives you infinite ammo and twice the fire rate!



'Operation Wolf' is the codename of the mission that you, a crack commando known only as Lone Wolf have been ordered to undertake. A small foreign military power has kidnapped VIPs and is holding them hostage in a concentration camp. Unless the fanatical dictator's demands are met, they'll all bite the dust. Your job is to stop that happening by rescuing the hapless hostages. Armed with an Uzi 9mm fitted with a nifty clip-on anti-tank rocket launcher you parachute into hostile territory and the operation is under way.

The enemy territory is split into six sectors, and completing one allows access to the next. Each sector scrolls slowly vertically towards a fixed point at the end. The enemy troops appear on screen before you even get a chance to admire the scenery and begin blasting away at you like there's no tomorrow. This is where the fun starts.

Hold down the mouse button to send a stream of bullets strafing across the

It's not all carefree goon-wasting in *Operation Wolf*. Oh, no. If your damage counter hits the top you fall to the ground and die in agony, and if you're careless and waste all your ammunition, you're captured and forced to join the guys you went out there to rescue. Luckily there's a continue play feature.





Glurk! Trouble's arrived in the form of the Arnold Schwarzenegger lookalike. Not only does he carry a lethal M60 belt-fed machine gun, he's padded up with body armour and can only be disposed of with a well-aimed head shot.

screen and wipe out any enemy troops in the way. There's no shortage of soldiers though, and swift reactions are needed to keep they dying before they get an chance to shoot you. To make matters worse, an irate soldier occasionally rushes onto the screen and opens fire at point blank range! They only appear on screen for about two seconds so you need to be quick to plug them.



Before long, support troops arrive on the scene in the form of motorcycle outriders, jeeps, armoured cars and helicopters that roll onto the screen at regular intervals, dishing out awesome firepower. This is where the rocket launcher comes in handy. Hit the right hand mouse button and an AT grenade is sent searing across the screen. If targetted correctly, this blows the mischievous vehicles to pieces, probably taking a few soldiers with it in the process. Use the grenades wisely, as they're in short supply (as indeed are your machine gun bullets). Luckily you can replenish your armaments by shooting the weapon magazines and rockets that appear on the ground from time to time. It's also possible to refresh your health level in the same manner.

A

Of course the Amiga version is arcade perfect too, with the only real difference being meatier sound effects, slightly refined graphics and the need for less disk swapping as it comes on just two disks (rather than ST's staggering three!). Go get it!

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	91%
VALUE	83%

OVERALL 89%

ST

For a long time there have been rumours circulating that the conversion of Operation Wolf would be arcade perfect (most of them circulated by Ocean). After much doubt and speculation the finished product has confirmed the rumours! It IS! Uzi aside, every last feature of the coin-op is here. The general in the jungle level, the bonus chickens, the civilians and medical personnel, the grenades, tanks, bonus levels, the introductory screens . . . nothing has been missed out! It's a perfect conversion and as such it's a fantastic game both aesthetically and in terms of playability. The cross-hair system works a lot better than expected and the whole feel is just so good it virtually IS the coin-op. The graphics are top-notch (but the screenshots should have convinced you of that already) and the music and sound effects are on a par with the rest of the game, ie: excellent. Conversions such as Super Hang-On and SDI have been close to the original. This IS the original. Buy it and own a coin-op without the need for coins.

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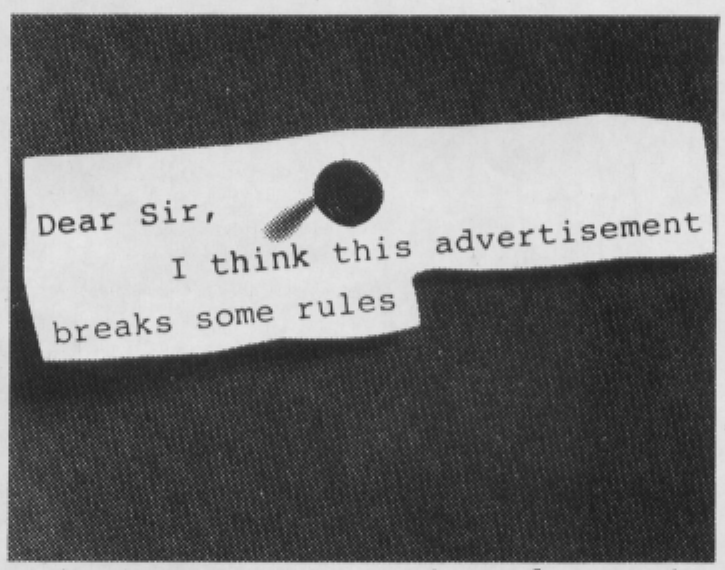
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DEMOS

Welcome back to the Public Domain. There's been a huge influx of quality Amiga material while the ST stuff seems to have lapsed somewhat (a situation which we hope that you'll have rectified by next month). Most of the demos featured have once again been supplied by top PD library 17 Bit Software, so if you want to get hold of the disks shown (or the ones featured last month) you can write to them at PO Box 97, Wakefield, WF1 1XX or give them a tinkle on 0924 366982. Remember, we're still keen to see YOUR art and demos, so send them to us at THE ONE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, and please remember to enclose ñ SAE if you want your disk back.

DISK 148

A Here's a demo that not all Amiga owners will be able to appreciate, unless they're privileged to have a 1Mb machine. It's an out-and-out animation demo (accompanied only by a short Art of Noise sample) where a heavy book falls open to reveal one of the pages, a picture of a knight in shining armour, who then comes to life and proceeds to perform some nifty moves with his sword. Gorgeous animation if you've got that extra 500K, but everyone else would be well advised to give it a miss.

DISK 190

A The Aegis Sonix-produced music cult lives on, with this, the (gasp) 14th disk of tunes created with the classic utility. The tunes have been written by Alistair Brimble (currently working on converting all of Rob Hubbard's classic 64 pieces to the Amiga) and



include some Jean Michel Jarre (Magnetic Fields II and Rendezvous II), **The Last Ninja** and **Saboteur II** conversions, as well as a variety of tunes under the title **Demon.** Rico Holmes has given the latest Sonix disk a graphical facelift with picture of a midi hi-fi and a new tune selection system. The music isn't too bad and as such it's essential for fans of the Sonix series.

DISK 189

A Not so much a legitimate demo, more a running preview of what you can expect of **Sword Of Sodan** from Discovery Software International (the company responsible for **Arkanoid** and **Zoom!** on the Amiga). It's a scrolling **Barbarian**-style slash 'em up that looks just a little bit like Capcom's coin-op **Street Fighter**. From what's on show this demo, the finished game looks like it could well be up to full arcade quality. Worth a look.



INTROMAKER

ST Not strictly a demo, as it's not officially available on PD, but we thought we'd let you know about it all the same. Programmer Andrew Bond (currently writing **Scumball** for Mastertronic) wasn't too impressed with THE ONE intro logo on our free preview disk with Issue One and so decided to improve it. The result is an enhanced logo complete with a scrolling message that can be re-written through a word-processor.





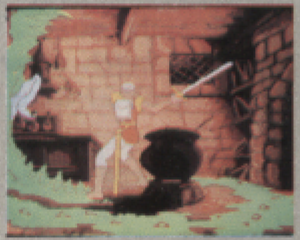
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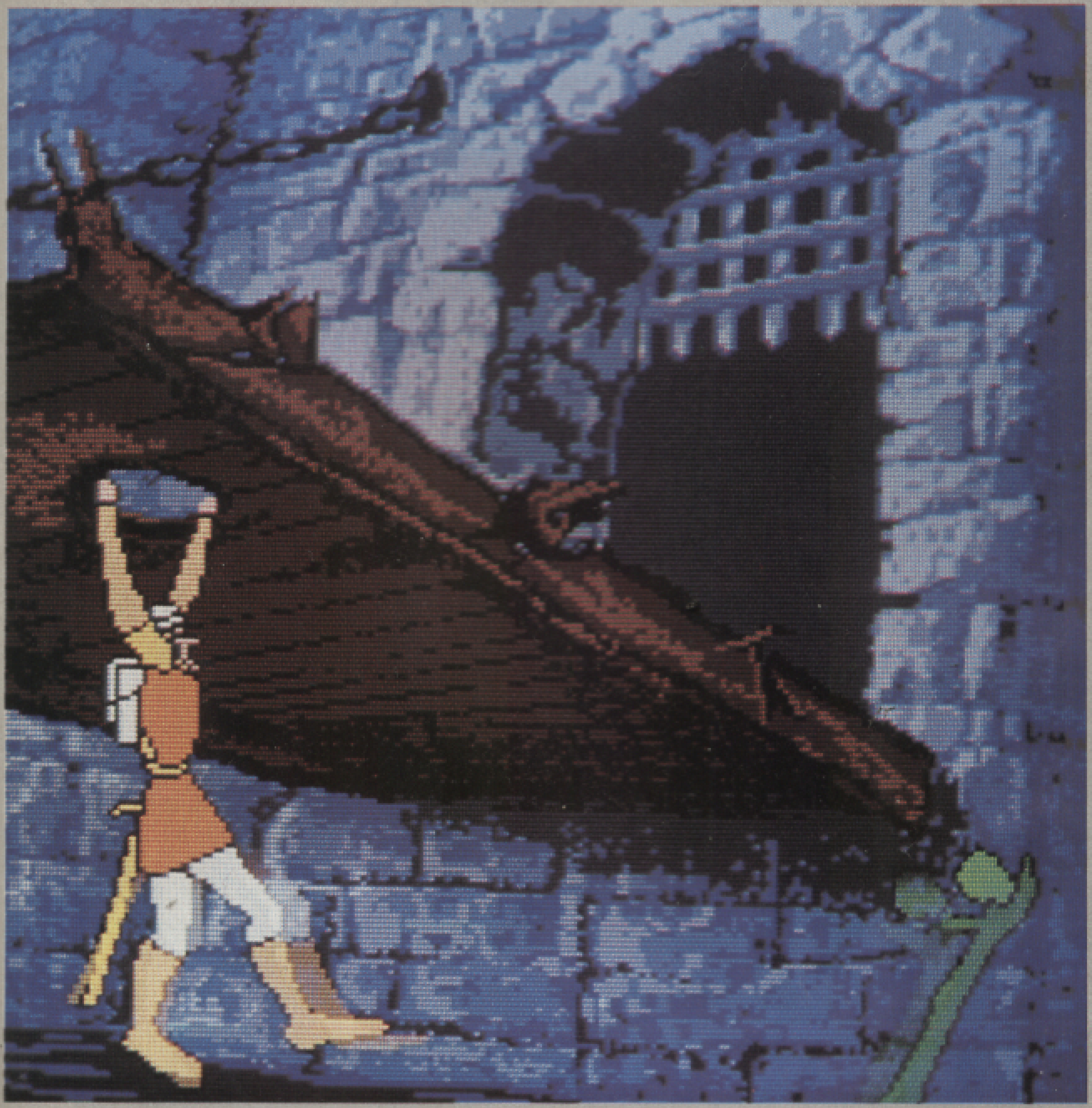
Definitely the highpoint of the month, but once again only those with a 1Mb machine will be able to appreciate it. The cult Atari CD-ROM based coin-op **Dragon's Lair** is currently being converted to the Amiga by US-based Readysoft, and this demo shows some of the set sequences that have already



been completed. Gasp as Dirk and Daring wrestles with a ravenous crocodiles! Squirm as he is pursued by the evil slime creature and marvel at some of the most impressive cartoon-style graphics to be seen on the Amiga. It's pretty stunning stuff and the finished game should be even more astounding.

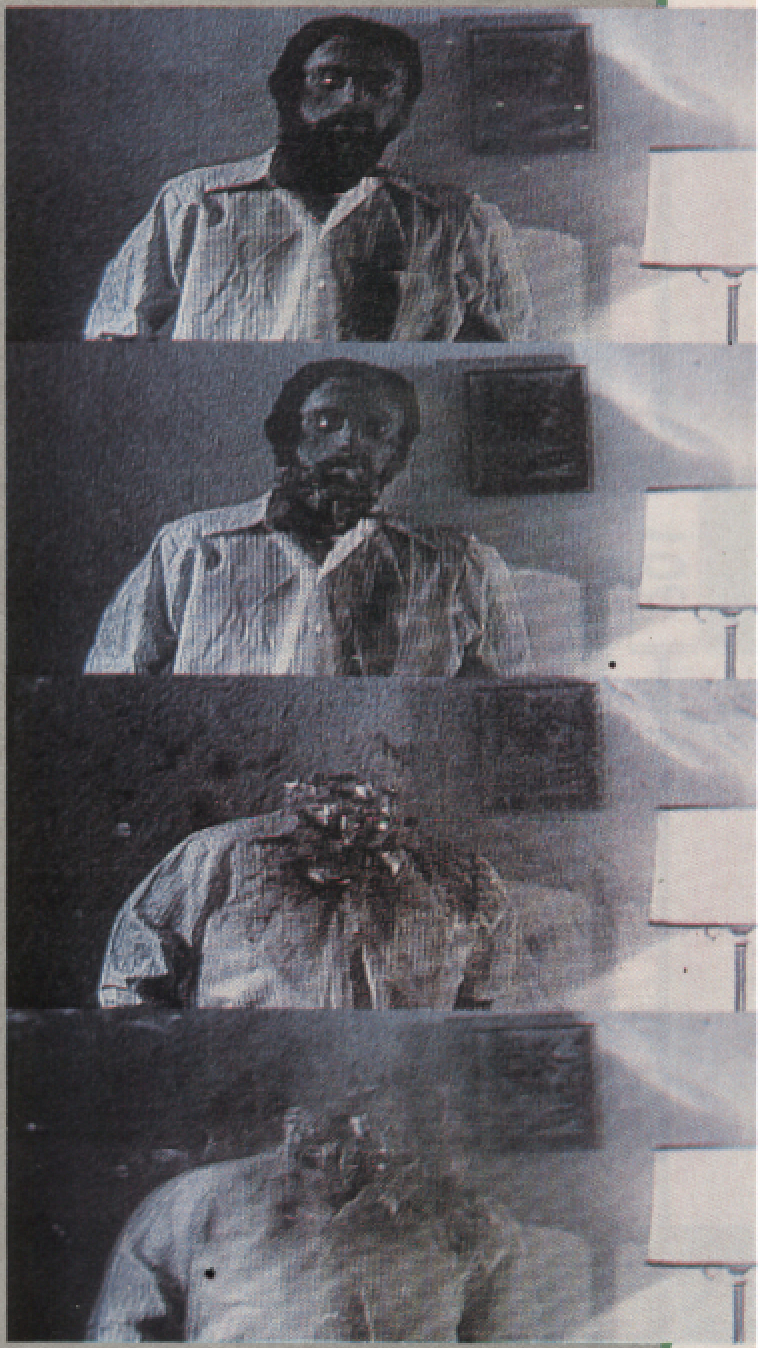






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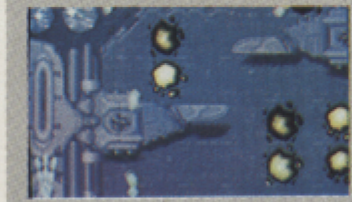
Mazier Darvis of Ealing in West London was kind enough to send us this bizarre little PD offering featuring four demos, two of which require a strong stomach to watch. Firstly there's a gut-wrenching digitised rendition of a man with his head exploding (ugh!). It looks to be taken from the shock horror film **Scanners**, but if anybody knows for certain write in and let us know. Also included is a scene digitised from George A Romero's

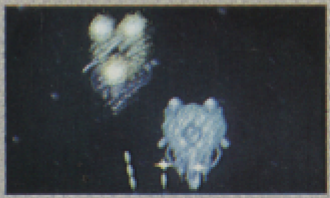


classic zombie movie **Day Of The Dead**, where an unfortunate individual has his arm hacked off with a blunt machete! Those are the highlights of the disk, the other two are rather less interesting. All ten pieces of Dave Whittaker's **Bubble Bobble** music have been ripped out of the game and can be played at random with the number keys along with a couple of original pieces, while the final demo is a sampled mix of Sabrina's pop single Boys Boys Boys. If you want a copy of this disk, send a couple of quid to Maziar at 3 Middlefields, Ealing, London W13 8BB (to cover the cost of the disk and postage). What a gent!


Robocop


Powerdrift


Truxton


EA

It may be cold outside, but the arcades are set to heat up for Christmas as RoboCop stomps in to take the country by storm. Following fast in his wake is a speedy lawnmower and a cast of thousands (well, not quite). This month, Ciáran Brennan loses the toss and heads off into the unknown, armed only with a pocket full of loose change...

ROBOCOP (Data East)

Half man, half machine and a whole lot like Judge Dredd, RoboCop burst onto the cinema screens and caused a sensation that's just about to be repeated on video. Data East has seen the potential of the metal lawgiver and unremarkably has him in an orgy of punching and shooting that closely mirrors the film's plot.

The background is a left to right scrolling cityscape which the nicely detailed hero doesn't so much walk along as 'clunk' like the overweight cyborg that he is – you can almost feel the cabinet shake with every step. And for a change the main sprite's robotic movement is an advantage instead of a drawback. There's not much of an objective, other than to get from one end of the playing area to the other.

RoboCop's armoury consists of the standard rocket pistol, a triple shot pistol and a



personal cannon (the latter pair are collected along the way). Other useful equipment is concealed in packing cases – and don't bother to look for the keys to these... a good Robopunch is enough to reveal their innards.

Between scrolling levels there's a quick spot of gunsight alignment to be carried out. By moving and static targets, the sight is aligned and extra points are awarded.

There are plenty of scrolling and shooting games doing the rounds at the moment, but RoboCop is easily capable of holding its head up with the best of them. the look is good, the feel is even better and the whole package is rounded off with a range of effective sonics. Take a glimpse of a grim future and go on the beat with RoboCop at the earliest opportunity.





POWER DRIFT (Sega)

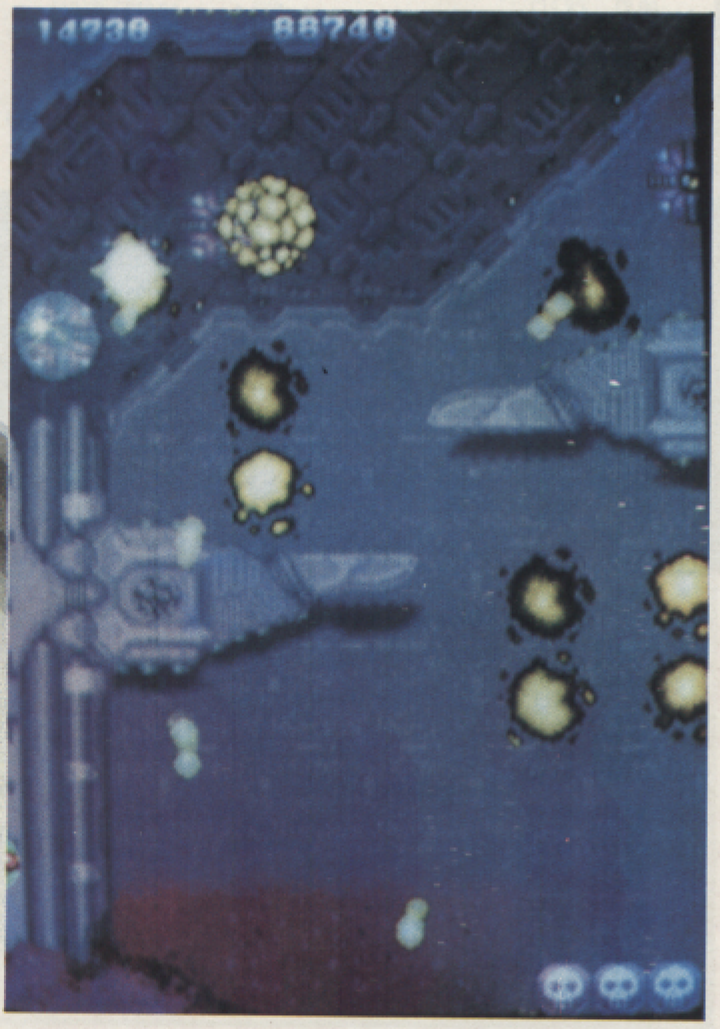


Anybody fancy another sit-down racing simulation? How about a spin through Monaco's round the houses circuit in the latest Jaguar prototype? No? Okay then, what about taking the wheel of one of the unbeatable Maclarens and zooming around Brands Hatch? Old hat! Right, you won't be able to resist this one... here's the keys to a souped up lawnmower – and that bumpy log track over there is the circuit. Now you're talking!

Move over OutRun *et al*, Power Drift has arrived for those of us who take their driving (not so) seriously. The method may be tried and tested, but the game has plenty of surprises up its sleeve. For a start the circuit is only about 200 yards long, so to compensate there are plenty of laps to be negotiated.

The cabinet is one of the usual hydraulically-controlled affairs, but extra realism is added by the juddering sensation that's experienced when the mower is taken over one of the log overpasses – remove any false teeth before attempting this stunt.

There is a race of sorts to take part in, but the opposition is fairly weak and the only real problem is avoiding the trees and other obstacles that pop up on the side of the track. There are 25 courses in all to be negotiated – finish in third place or better and it's onto the next for another round of frenetic (if repetitive) racing. Power Drift's not exactly a must, but if you liked WEC Le Mans etc then give it a try for its novelty value.



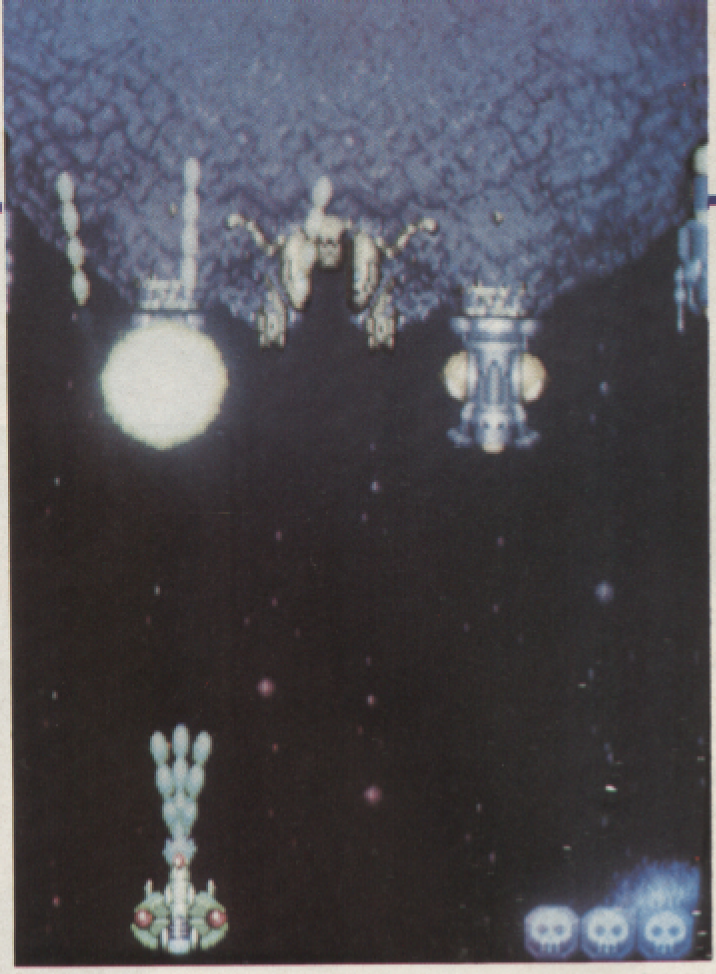
TRUXTON (Taito)

The arcades are now completely saturated with scrolling shoot 'em ups, so any new additions to the flock have to be pretty special to make an impression. Unfortunately Truxton doesn't quite meet up to this requirement – despite the inclusion of pretty graphics and absolutely wonderful explosions.

Although the action scrolls from top to bottom, the first similar game that springs to mind is Nemesis – mainly because of the snake-like creatures that grow from the side walls and the progressive expansion of the ship's armoury.

Lettered icons appear as the approaching enemy is destroyed: T loads a 'Tatsujin' bomb to the original superstructure, while S increases the maximum speed





and P adds to the ship's power. Finally, two unusual icons, 1Up and 2Up add one and two extra lives respectively.

Truxton is smooth, fast and colourful with no apparent glitches, but at this stage it should only appeal to the real fanatic. Give it a try if you fall into this category, but otherwise...

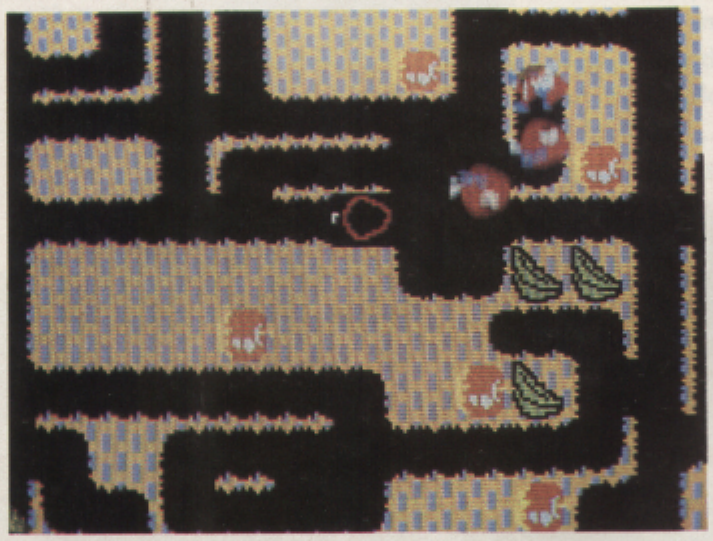


EA (Electrocoin)

Boulderdash may have slipped from the memories of most computer games-players a long time ago, but the team at London's leading coin-op distributors, Electrocoin, have seen fit to resurrect its ageing concept with their latest development.

The object revolves around the ancient dodge and collect scenario, with a splash of cuteness thrown in to attract God knows who. The incredibly sweet hero moves about a semi-solid background, eating away a route as he goes and avoiding a whole host of cutesy-eating strawberries (?!).

These menaces can be seen off by dropping an apple on their heads, but this isn't at all easy as you first have to wait until the strawberries are in exactly the right position – and while you're waiting for one to comply, one of his many mates is bound to sneak up behind you.



Another method used to destroy the advancing berries is to decimate them with what looks like a deadly M&M, but once again this poses problems of its own as only one bomb is available at a time and poor little cutesy has to wait 'til the first one explodes before another appears.

Other drawbacks include the two player game which is designed in the unfortunate one after another style, and yucky sound effects and the impossibly high difficulty level. Despite all this moaning, EA is a chuckle and is probably worth at least one try – and I've already had mine so it must be your turn now!

Who knows?

This sickly- sweetness may appea to someone . .





clik

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Taito arcade.

THE LAND OF RIS

Over the past four decades, Japan has built itself into a world leader in the field of entertainment technology, producing everything from televisions and stereos to synthesisers and video games. To find out what we can expect from the next wave of eastern technology, Nick Kelly paid a flying visit to Tokyo to take in the sights and sounds of this year's Amusement Machines Show.



Jaleco's new oversized arcade machine makes even the worst game look vaguely entertaining.



Two tense moments from Capcom's stunning new coin-op, Ghouls 'n Ghosts.



Try a little thought association experiment with a selection of friends; ask them what Japan conjures up. Chances are that close behind sumo wrestling and sushi, hi-tech gadgetry will be mentioned.



It's perhaps not surprising that the Land Of The Rising Sun has become the world's foremost producer of technical wizardry. The marriage between a tradition of neat and innovative design stretching back thousands of years, the effects of a crushing military defeat on a super-nationalistic people (and the subsequent bars on any kind of military research and development), a naturally strong work ethic and a high degree of over-population has produced an incredibly rich society in which any kind of labour – or space-saving innovation is handsomely rewarded.



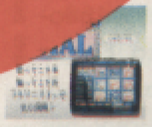
The main tool used for restoring the nation to international prominence was the out-performance and out-selling of the rest of the world in the market place. Leisure time and space is a precious commodity, hence the huge popularity of the sophisticated indoor entertainment provided by computers, coin-ops and games consoles – amenities which are easily accessible and space-economical.



Sega's Super Circuit set-up, plus a car's-eye view (top).



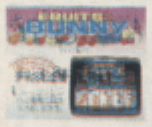
NG TECHNOLOGY



The 26th Amusement Machines Show showcased one major development on the coin-op side, several excellent new games, plenty of average ones and a couple of weird and wonderful novelty items.



The major development was the introduction of large screen 26" monitors for games cabinets. There have been outsize screens featured on large, expensive dedicated consoles, but this is the first time that any company has launched a universal large-screen monitor compatible with games housed in standard cabinets. Jaleco, Capcom and Data East each had their own 26" cabinet on display, and practically every other coin-op company present was using these larger monitors to display their own games.



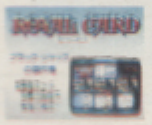
The larger screens add tremendously to graphics ordinarily seen on much smaller screens. And when you realise the potential for developing far more graphically detailed games specifically designed to make use of the system, you begin to see that in a year's time these large screen monitors are likely to be the rule rather than the exception in arcades around the world.



Capcom produced the hottest large screen results. In particular, the long-awaited follow-up to **Ghosts 'n' Goblins**..... **Ghosts 'n' Ghouls**.



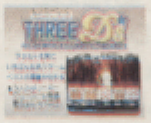
Stangely enough, it wasn't Sega's usual batch of brilliantly innovative new dedicated sit-into video consoles that was causing the crowds to throng around its stand.



Nope, what really wowed the Sega stand-throngers was the extraordinary **Super Circuit**. It's like a giant Scaletrix kit, powered by trackside **Out Run**-style consoles. The track was at least 100 yards in length and six feet across, with tunnels, hills and curves. Racing one another around this track were three foot-long model cars, each powered by a human driver housed in one of the three track-side consoles. The model cars are radio-controlled, and each has a tiny closed circuit TV camera mounted on its body. These "worms-eye-view" shots of the track are transmitted from each model car to the screen of its respective controlling console, so the three trackside drivers really drive their respective model cars around the track. The speeds were impressive, the feeling that you were really sitting in the cockpit of your Tom Thumb Formula 1 model as it careered under the tunnels over the bumps and into the side walls beating anything that even the hottest arcade car racing simulation could ever hope to achieve.



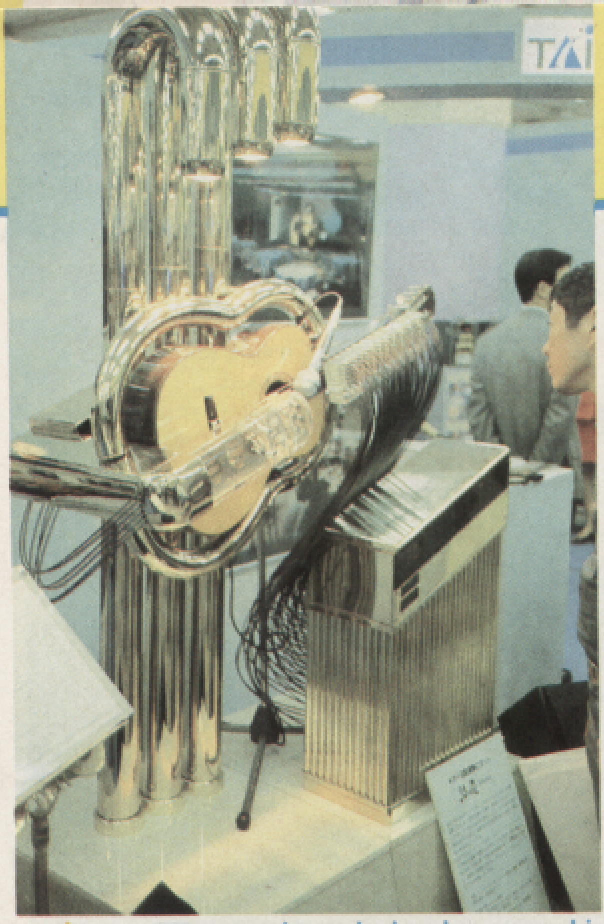
There's little chance that this game will turn up in very many British locations. It takes up about the same space as 100 upright PCB cabinets would, and reputedly costs a cool £100,000 to install.



Among the gadgets that caught my eye were a downhill ski simulator slope with a "treadmill" moving surface for skiers to practice their skills, and an indoor golf driving range tent with a screen for a back wall, which responded to a real golf ball being driven into it by showing the ball's likely flight path on a video of a real golf course. But my favourite gadget was an extraordinary robotic figure, six feet tall and constructed of brass piping and wires, which clutched a real Yamaha acoustic guitar. Shove your money in, select a tune from the jukeshow-style selector and this amazing contraption actually plucks your choice out on the guitar. Whatever will they think of next?



One piece of technology which has been making the headlines over here for some time now, but was receiving its first public airing: Extended Definition Television. For the technical amongst you, these TV sets make use of advances in digital signal processing and semiconductor memory to effectively double the number of scan lines. In practise, this means



Even guitar playing has gone hi-tech in Japan. . .

enormous increases in definition of TV images. In addition, they can also receive specially encoded EDTV broadcasts, giving even greater clarity. EDTVs should within five years be a standard domestic appliance, and when you remember that the compact disc only came on the market relatively recently, and now accounts for a staggering 83% of all recordings purchased in Japan (cassettes pull in 10% and vinyl records just 7%), who's going to argue?



Still, it'll probably be a little while before EDTV hits these shores – for one thing the current price of the model Panasonic was showing is about £1,750, which seems to put it out of most Briton's reach, and therefore would probably make installing the necessary transmitting equipment a financially risky move for any British TV stations.



The major TV stations were also displaying an even more advanced system, known as High Definition Television which boasts screen quality comparable to 35mm film. However, as the technology surrounding HDTV means that standard TV sets wouldn't be able to pick up the broadcast signals at all, this amazing system is unlikely to become a commercial reality for some time.



The other major innovation on show was the floppy disc camera, which uses video floppy discs rather than rolls of film to record the images. Among other things, the resultant pictures can be displayed on ordinary TV sets with no loss of quality. With the basic camera retailing for as little as £315 (the Sony Mavica), this could become a massively popular alternative to standard cameras.



Nintendo's Famicom games system still enjoys a very hefty majority of the games console market over here, but NEC's PC Engine is seen by many as representing the cutting edge of console technology. Competition is becoming intense however, with Sega just in the process of launching its own impressive looking 16-bit system, and Nintendo looking at doing the same thing.



Nevertheless, Hudsonsoft and NEC have one major trick up their sleeves: the PC-ROM cartridge. This attachment to the basic PC Engine console runs a Compact Disc which enables the already powerful machine to use over 250 times the amount of memory currently available to it. According to Hudsonsoft this innovation will enable arcade-quality graphics, and CD quality sounds, to enter your front room – for a price, of course.

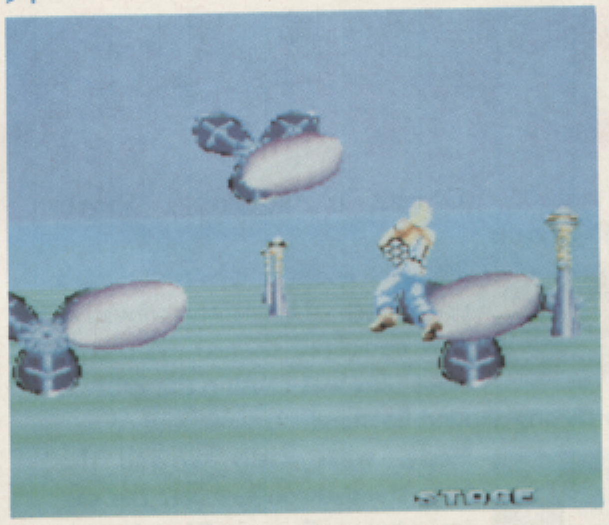


A visit to the offices of the popular Log-In Magazine (circulation c. 400,000) enabled me to take a quick peek at "the computer all Japanese games players want to own," according to editor Akhiko Yabu. This machine is the amazing Sharp X68000, very expensive by Japanese standards, retailing at somewhere in or around £1,500, but, as the coin-op standard versions of **Space Harrier** and **Salamander** which I saw testify, you are getting something a wee bit special for your 1½k.



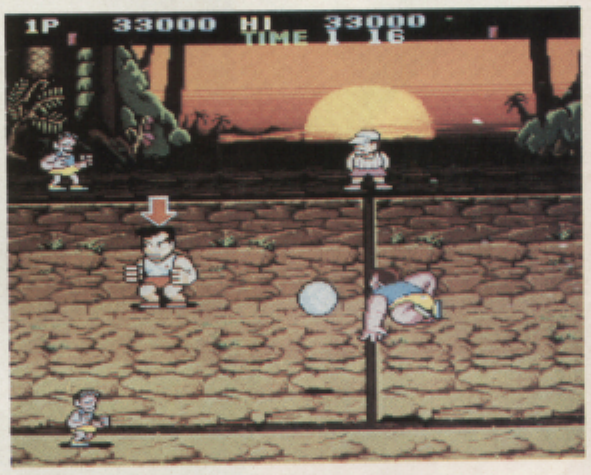
Finally if anybody still isn't completely convinced of the extent to which gaming has become an everyday part of many Japanese people's lives, a visit to Tokyo's answer to Tower Records, The Wave Store in the snooty Bond-Streetish Roppongi district would surely put them right. For there, taking up a full shelf in amongst the Springsteens and Bon Jovis, is an array of CDs containing – you've guessed it – the soundtracks to every arcade game imaginable.

Sega's Space Harrier on Sharp's new 16-bit wonder-machine, the X68000, which retails for around £1,500 in Japan.





One game that inspired Speedball. . . this is the Sharp X68000



The Japanese soft-shops even stock CDs of arcade game soundtracks!



HEROES OF THE LANCE

ARCADE ACTION

HEROES OF THE LANCE marks the first computer action game that re-creates the epic battle between good and evil on the world of Krynn.
Controlling eight Companions, each with different specialised attributes and skills, guide these brave adventurers deep into the treacherous ruins of the temple XaK Tsaroth to retrieve the precious Disks of Mishakal.
As you descend into the Abyss, the Companions must defeat the hordes of monstrous Draconians in hand-to-hand combat, deal with powerful magic and survive the onslaught of attacks from giant spiders, skeletal undead and countless other terrors.
But your final obstacle makes these monstrosities innocuous by comparison. The platinum disks you seek are guarded by Khisanth, an ancient black dragon. And there is but one way to vanquish this mighty beast...
...find the key to destroy Khisanth or you are doomed to failure.

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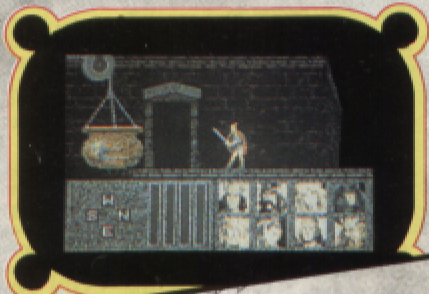
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POOL OF RADIANCE

FANTASY ROLE PLAYING

Located on the northern shore of the Moonsea in the Forgotten Realms, the fabled city of Phlan had been overrun by monsters led by a mysterious leader. Your quest: discover the identity of this evil force.
Pool of Radiance adheres faithfully to the legendary Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ fantasy role playing systems. No detail is missed including 6 player characters; computer controlled non-player characters; the Adventurers' Journal packed with history, maps and clues and the Translation Wheel that converts Elvish and Dwarvish writing to English. The gameplay is exhilarating and the graphics state of the art – portrait displays, 3D perspective, tactical combat display and personalised weapons selections compile to form the ultimate breakthrough in fantasy role-playing computer games.

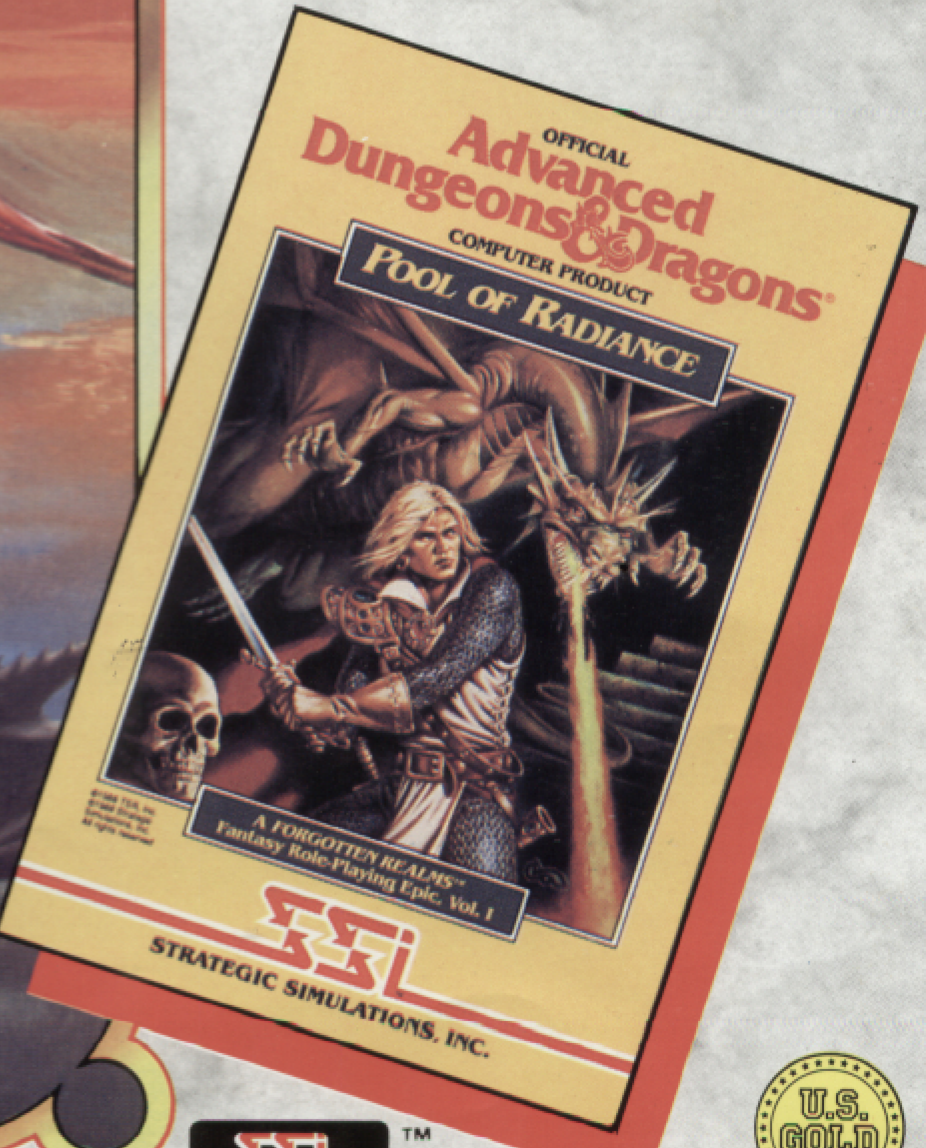


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